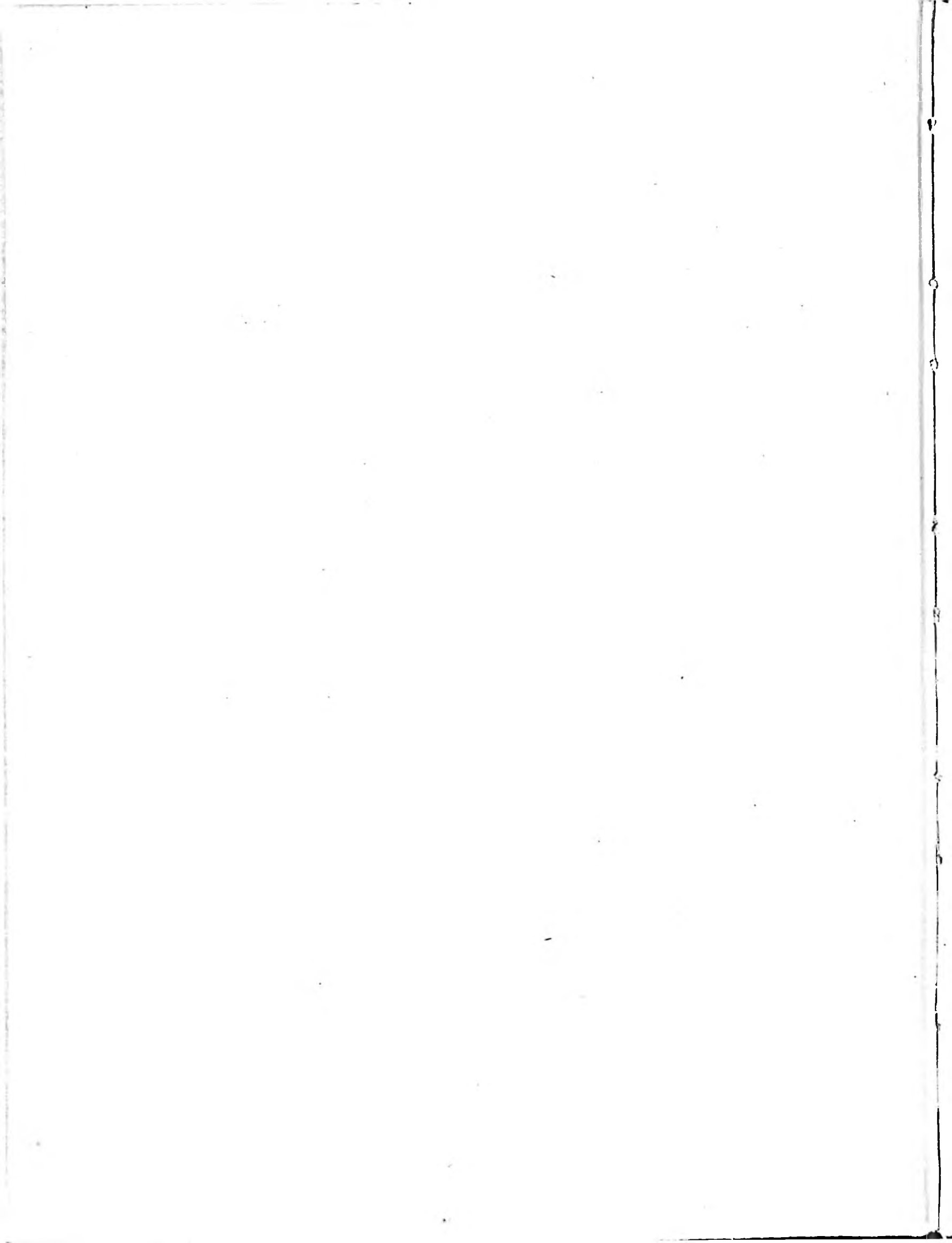


COLLECTED
ESSAYS
& PAPERS
RELATING TO
FREEMASONRY



COLLECTED ESSAYS AND PAPERS RELATING
TO FREEMASONRY.



Robert Freke Gould

COLLECTED

SAYS & PAPERS

RELATING TO

FREEMASONRY

By
Richard P. G. G. G.

Author of "The Freemason's Handbook"

and "The Freemason's Directory"

London: W. & A. G. G.

1888

Price 1s. 6d.



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1888



Robert Freke Gould

COLLECTED
ESSAYS & PAPERS
RELATING TO
FREEMASONRY

—BY—

ROBERT FREKE GOULD

(Late 31st Regiment, Barrister-at-Law),

Past Senior Grand Deacon, England;

*Author of "The History of Freemasonry," "A Concise History
of Freemasonry," "Military Lodges,"
and other Works.*

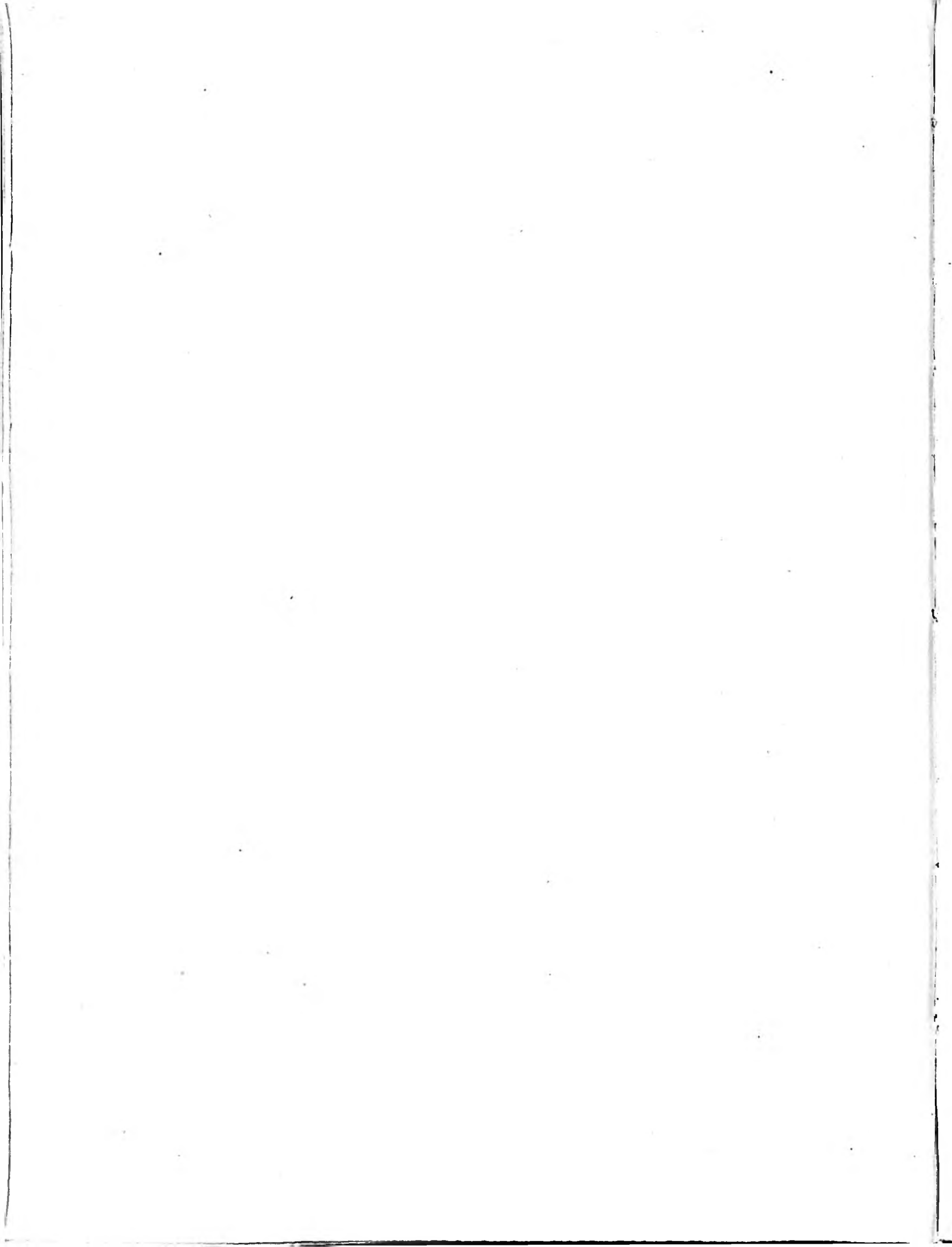


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1913.



—To—

The Worthy Brethren,

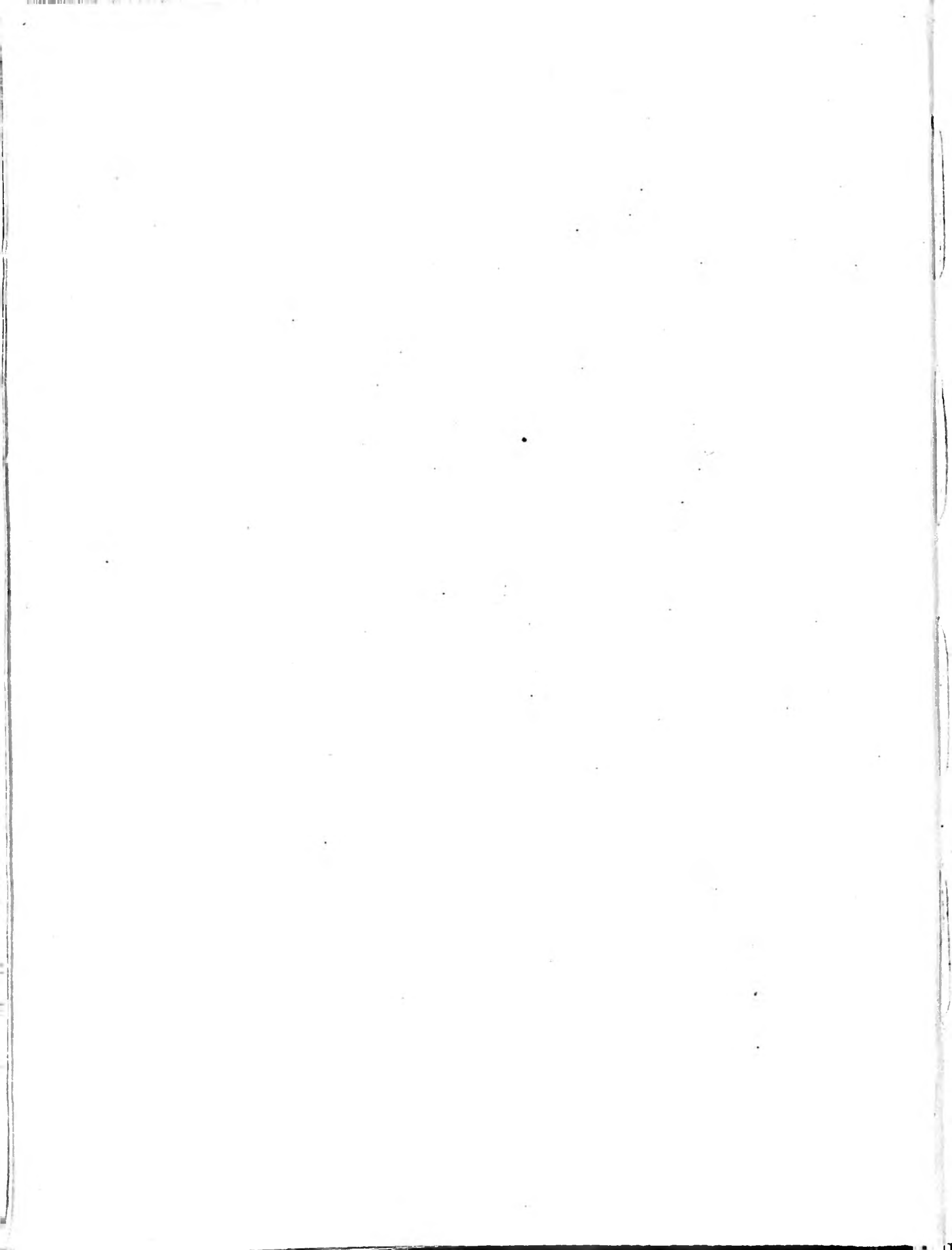
Who are, or have been,

Reporters on Correspondence in the
Masonic Jurisdiction of the
New World,

*In admiration of their literary and critical
acumen, and*

*In grateful acknowledgement of numerous
tokens of their goodwill.*

August, 1913.

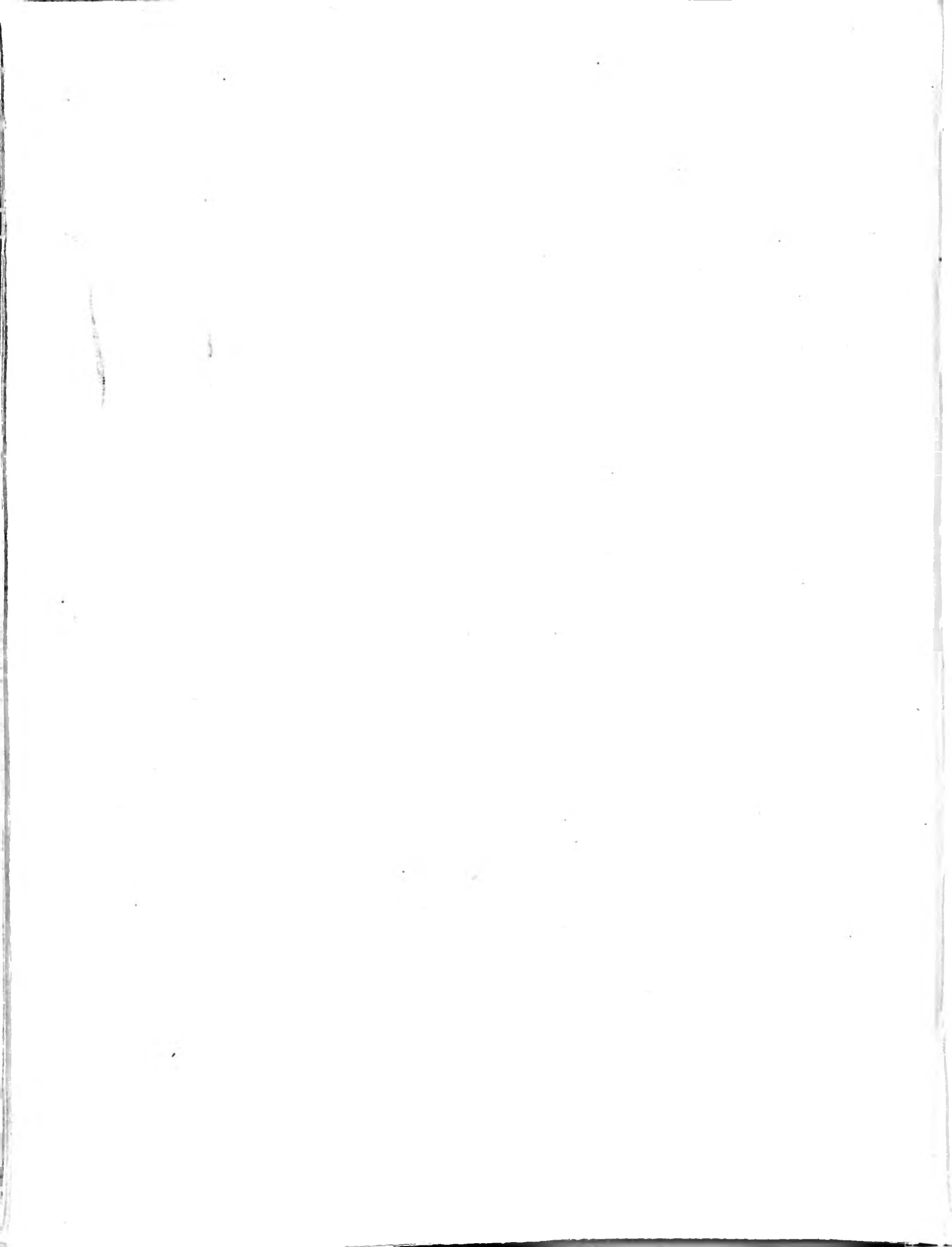


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FOREWORD.

MY thanks are most cordially expressed to the Editors of the *Freemason*, the *Freemason's Chronicle*, and the *Northern Freemason*, and to the permanent Committee of the *Quatuor Coronati* Lodge, for permission to reproduce the series of Essays, now appearing in this volume, which were originally published in the columns of those Journals, and in the *Transactions (Ars Quatuor Coronatorum)* of that well-known Lodge. I also gratefully acknowledge the kindness of my friend, Mr. J. Tomlinson—P.M. and Secretary, Bisley Lodge, No. 2317—by whom the proof sheets were read as they passed through the press.

The reprints will be found to contain a variety of disquisitions on the Written and Unwritten Traditions of the Freemasons, but a difference occurs with regard to them which should be noted. The former, as given in the Old (or Manuscript) Constitutions, remain as they were in times more or less remote from our own,—*litera scripta manet*, but the latter (or Symbolical Traditions) must of necessity have been of a less fixed, and of a more flux and transitory character.

To a study of the Symbolism of the Fraternity as existing immediately before the Era of Grand Lodges, the prefatory Essay will prove (let me venture to hope) an introduction, and there are a few words with respect to both sets of traditions which seem to offer themselves conveniently in this place.

The articles written by me at any time prior to 1903, upon the "Old Constitutions," were supplemented by a further examination of the whole subject in my *Concise History of Freemasonry*, while those that have appeared since the publication of that work, and particularly the two dealing with the degrees or steps of Masonry (XI. and XII.), are to be considered—in accordance with their respective dates—as embodying the later views of the present writer with regard to the subjects to which they relate.

It has been a matter of regret with both the author and the publisher of this volume, that room could not be found for the biographies of Dr. W. Stukeley, the Duke of Wharton, Martin Clare, and Dr. Manningham, which, under the general title of "Celebrities of the Craft," originally appeared in the *Transactions* of the *Quatuor Coronati* Lodge (*A.Q.C.*); and were intended to illustrate the character and conditions of the Speculative (or Symbolical) Masonry, which prevailed in England in 1721, 1724, 1730 and 1756. These literary portraits will, however, be given at a later date, should the encouragement extended to the present selection of "Collected Essays" be sufficient to warrant the publication of a further series.

Three maps of Great Britain were drawn by the late Mr. G. W. Speth, and they originally appeared with my *Commentary on the Regius MS.*, on its publication in 1889. The other illustrations include the martyrdoms of St. Alban and Saint Amphibalus, and a sketch of Building Operations in the fifteenth century.

St. Alban, the protomartyr of Britain, is said to have been martyred in the time of Diocletian (A.D. 304) presumably at Verulamium.

The introduction of Amphibalus into the story occurred during the twelfth century, and Geoffrey of Monmouth is one of the first to mention the name. It was probably first supplied by the fabricator of the spurious *Libes of St. Alban and Amphibalus*, which was written at St. Albans in the twelfth century, and printed three centuries afterwards. Amphibalus means a cloak, and it was probably through a *lapsus calami*, or misinterpretation, that it was assigned as a name to the unknown Christian priest protected by Alban.

St. Alban is a well-known figure in Masonic history (or fable); but Saint Amphibalus, or Amphabell, was introduced into the legend of the Craft by the author of the *Cooke MS.*, wherein it is spelt *Adhabelle* by a mistake of the scribe. The Saint (or supposed Saint) is referred to by Dr. Plot in his *Natural History of Staffordshire*. The name is correctly given as Amphabell in the *William Watson MS.*, but has been omitted in later versions of the legend.

With regard to the reproduction of the final illustration, the words of Mr. W. De Gray Birch, may be usefully borne in mind—"It may generally be taken for granted," he tells us, "that the buildings which occur in a Manuscript, are those of the style in use about the time of the Manuscript itself. There is seldom any attempt at a real picture of any particular building, or any idea of antiquarian correctness in a historical picture. Thus, in a Bible of the 14th century, the Temple of Jerusalem will contain an altar and reredos not unlike that which the abbot had perhaps just put up in the artist's monastery; each man taking for his model that which was nearest to hand."

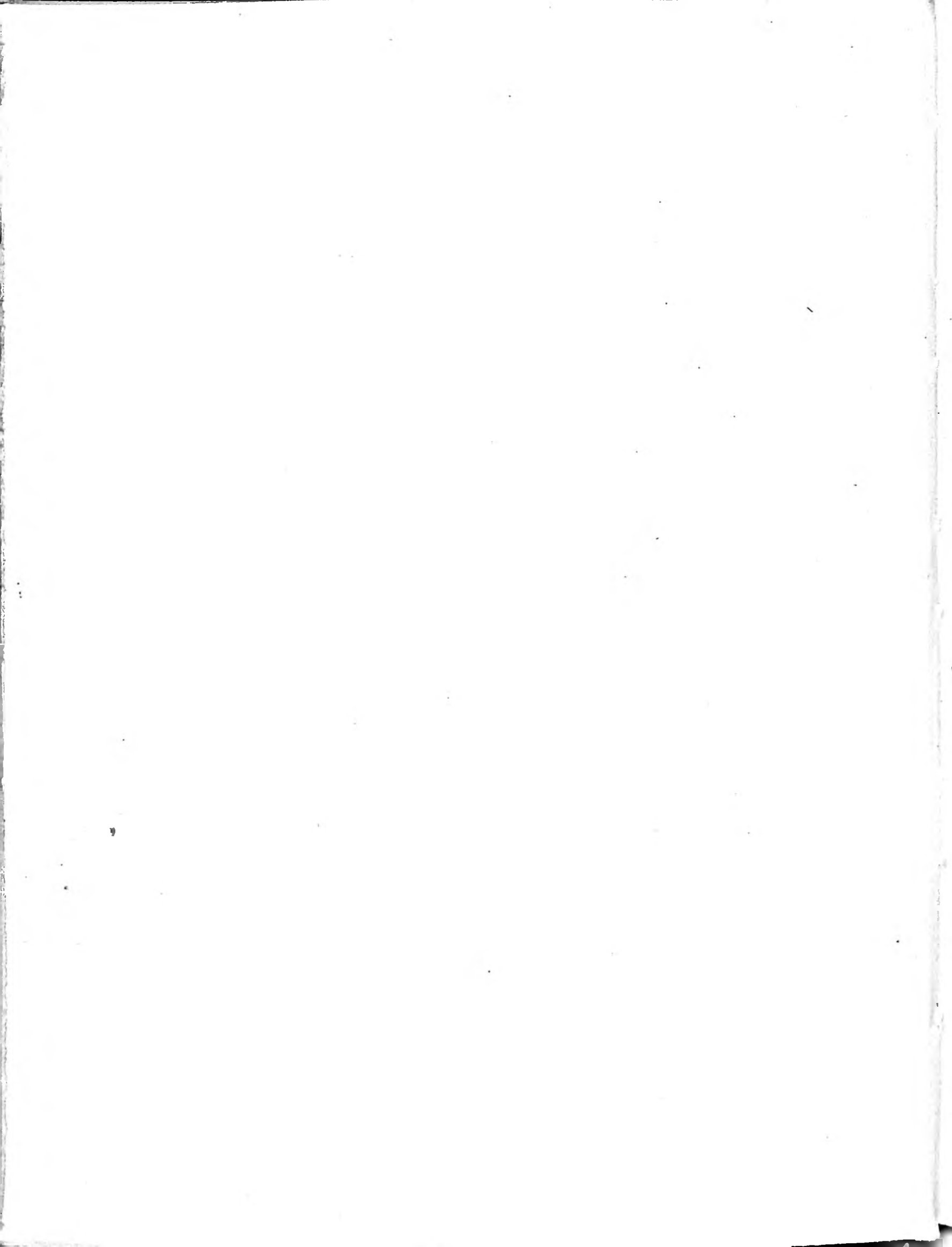
I have only to add in conclusion that where Roman Numerals are given within parenthesis, either in this Foreword or in the prefatory Essay which next follows, these are meant to refer to the numbers of the Reprints as they are shown on the Contents Page of the present volume.

R. F. GOULD.

KINGFIELD,
WOKING,
August 6th, 1913.

I.

ON SOME CATECHISMS AND OTHER
SO-CALLED MASONIC REVELATIONS
IN THE SCOTTISH IDIOM.



ON SOME CATECHISMS AND OTHER SO-CALLED MASONIC REVELATIONS IN THE SCOTTISH IDIOM.

I.

To the larger number of pieces contained in this volume the present essay will be found more or less introductory, and after a perusal of the entire series of reprints, I shall ask the reader to take a backward glance at the remarks I am now proceeding with, which have for their object, the bringing up to date the conclusions that seem to be fairly deducible from the most recent evidence in regard to the character and existence of Degrees or Steps in Masonry, at a period ante-dating the Era of Grand Lodges (1717).

In the two articles (XI. and XII.) written in 1903, the subject of Degrees was very fully considered, and the question to be next dealt with, is the extent to which the deductions which seemed to be legitimate at that date are still permissible in the light shed by the Masonic research which has taken place in the ten years which have since elapsed.

These two articles, therefore, will form a convenient stepping-off ground for the prosecutors of our present "Inquiry." They were designed to show that two degrees (Apprentice and Master) and not three were the inheritance of the earliest of Grand Lodges at its formation in 1717; that a popular delusion, leading to the wholesale manufacture of so-called Scots degrees sprang up, in consequence of the ambiguous wording of the *Old Regulations*, after their publication in the *Book of Constitutions*, 1723; and that the degree of Master, though specifically mentioned in the minutes of our English Lodge under the year 1727, was for the first time unequivocally referred to in those of a Scottish Lodge under the year 1735. The spurious rituals or catechisms professing to reveal the secrets of Masonry were also examined at some length, and it is to a particular section of these alleged revelations that attention will next be directed. I shall begin, however, with the remark, that there is probably nothing, except perhaps the solemn and misleading nonsense published about Masonry in our huge encyclopædias and other works of general reference (IX.) which has tended so much to guard the secrets of the Society from the gaze of the outer world, as the never-failing supply of catechisms and "exposures" in which those secrets are stated to be fully revealed. Not indeed that the confusion their perusal engenders is restricted to the profane reader, for they cast an equal spell over the intelligence of the most trusted writers of the Craft, and if anyone can point out even a solitary instance where two of them are in total agreement in a matter of interpretation, he will succeed in finding out what I have never been able to discover for myself.

The first and initial difficulty in dealing with these productions, is to determine the question of their age. They are for the most part undated, and as the commentators upon them have usually been believers in either one or three degrees (instead of the actual two) having been in existence prior to 1717, so their rooted convictions on this crucial point have tintured or coloured the judgments they respectively pronounce.

It is not, indeed, to be expected that the votaries of what they fondly style the "Higher Degrees," will ever relinquish their belief in the existence of these novelties at a period far anterior to the second decade of the eighteenth century, or that the unreflecting and wholly uncritical school of writers who are convinced that anything more than the crudest form of reception, embracing a rehearsal of the Legend of the Craft, was unknown to our Masonic forefathers of the seventeenth century, will cease for a generation or two to find willing disciples. Nevertheless, there are a few students of Masonry, and the number is slowly increasing, who rightly consider that the rules of evidence followed in Courts of Justice and adopted by the most trustworthy writers of general history cannot be entirely dispensed with by the prosecutors of Masonic research. It is to this critical school, and not to the unreflecting class of inquirers, whose notions of the laws of evidence are of their own manufacture, that I am chiefly addressing myself, in the present essay, and in the observations which next follow. I shall be glad, therefore, if the positions I am laying down should be ratified by their approval.

That all the forms, copies, or versions of the MS. Constitutions are derived from *English* originals, has long been a well-established fact, but I shall probably be the first to offer an opinion that without any exception all the spurious rituals or catechisms can be similarly traced to an *English* source. A profusion of Scottish terms or words by no means indicates that the colloquy or catechism is a production of the Northern Kingdom. Indeed, quite the reverse, as the more frequent the use of the Scottish dialect in these compositions the more legitimate becomes the conclusion that the piece is one of the many so-called "revelations" that made their appearance after the publication of the first *Book of Constitutions* in 1723; and the older the professed "disclosure" of the kind, if circulating in Scotland, really is, the greater will be its freedom from expressions which carry with them a tincture or flavour from the soil. That is to say, the less will the imported dialogue be found to vary from the parent type; or, to put it in another way, the more infrequent the use of the Scottish idiom, the clearer will become the inference of its fidelity to the original. It therefore follows that as two degrees (or steps) and no more, were known to the English Craft of A.D. 1717-1723, so the use of words in the Scottish dialect implying any except over that number which may be met with in these supposititious "revelations" is sufficient of itself to stamp them as having been put together, compiled, or concocted after the appearance in print of the first *Book of Constitutions* (1723), with its ambiguous "Old Regulations," XIII., by which not only the ritual-mongers but also the stream of Masonic writers down to our own day have been singularly but none the less effectually misled.

To the objection which may be raised that my remarks are taking too wide a range, and that a manuscript may yet be brought to light containing entries that tend to invalidate the conclusion at which I have arrived with respect to a bare plurality of degrees having been known and worked in either North or South Britain, prior to what is called the "Revival" of 1717—let me reply, that when any such document shall be produced, it will be time enough to deal with it, though not to trifle with the reader—I shall unhesitatingly declare, that the combined testimony of any number of spurious rituals—all bearing assured dates of not later than the first decade of the eighteenth century, and all alluding to the degrees of Apprentice, Fellow Craft, and Master Mason as separate and distinct steps in Masonry would be insufficient to convince me that their authors or compilers could have had any better grounds for their statements than were possessed by the manufacturers of the imaginative and delusive crop of catechisms and "disclosures" which attain such a luxuriant growth after the earliest of Grand Lodges had risen, almost at a single bound, into notice and esteem.

To say that the class of writings and pamphlets under examination are of no value whatever, and only serve to bewilder the student of Masonic history, would, however, be going too far. To the eyes of the critical inquirer they present a pale reflection of the truth, and paradoxical as it may appear at a first view, it will be found on closer inspection, that the service they render in the study of Masonic ceremonial, lies not in what they profess to reveal, but in what, if the loose statements of credulous and uncritical writers are to be seriously reckoned with, they may be said to obstinately conceal.

For example, the minutes of an English regular Lodge, under the year 1727 (XII.), which mention—and only mention—the ceremonies of Masonic admission and of the Master's degree, have by the exercise of some occult faculty of historical divination, been adjudged to prove the existence, at the same time, of an additional step, or degree, that of Fellow Craft—a purely *Scottish* term, and unheard of in English Masonry until its use by Dr. James Anderson, in 1723—which is complacently and in the very teeth of evidence to the contrary, assumed to have formed a connecting link between the other two. That three degrees were known to the English Masons of 1723, and that the second was that of Fellow Craft, has been commonly accepted by the two divergent groups of writers, who, unable, to perceive the uniform trend of the evidence, believe respectively, the one that a tri-gradal system had its origin in remote antiquity, and the other that a majority of its component parts was the creation of some unknown wisacres shortly after the year 1717. It has not been realised by these uncritical brethren that the word "Fellow Craft," which, prior to the era of Grand Lodges—and for a long time afterwards—bore in Scotland the meaning of "Master," acquired on its naturalization in England and absorption within the Masonic vocabulary of the South, an entirely new signification. This circumstance cannot be impressed too strongly or too often on the minds of those students, whose primary object in the examination of old documentary evidence—having any possible bearing on the early history of Freemasonry—is the discovery of the truth.

Without an exception, for even when such are supposed to occur, as in cases where catechisms have been printed in the public newspapers, the texts they present may be old or new—all the so-called "disclosures" are of uncertain date.

In order to unravel the mystery surrounding their age, therefore, the inquirer, whoever he may be, and in whatever direction his predilections may tend to carry him, will be thrown back largely on conjecture. This must necessarily be the case when attempts are made to solve a mystery by the aid of what is called internal evidence, meaning the evidence yielded by the contents of the document itself.

Hence a word of caution to the generation of students who are entering upon such a study for the first time, may induce them to weigh carefully in the balance the Scottish and English uses of the term "Fellow Craft," whenever the expression is to be met with, during the early Georgian age, either in Lodge minutes of the United Kingdom, or in the productions of the ritual mongers of all sorts and kinds.

The minutes of the Lodge held at the Swan and Rummer, in Finch Lane, London, in 1727, tell their own tale and do not stand in need of corroboration from any other source, yet if such were required, it would be amply supplied by the unbroken silence with respect to other degrees or steps than those of Apprentice and Master, of every form or version of unauthorised ritual, antedating the publication of the "General Regulations" of the Grand Lodge of England in 1723.

For reasons, however, that will shortly become apparent to the reader, I shall before passing away from the Lodge minutes of 1727, invite his particular attention to the fact that they point with the utmost clearness to survivals of *English* Masonic ceremonial, which were wholly free from any admixture of ritual from a Scottish source.

But to return to the catechisms, which so far as their contents are in harmony with the minutes and records of Lodges, may be said to perform a work of supererogation in confirming what, on evidence of the highest possible character we already know to be the truth.

Whatever passes before a mirror is reflected on its surface. The shadows come and go, but when there is nothing to be reflected, you will vainly look in the mirror for the appearance of something that has never passed before it. It is the accepted doctrine of the school of writers who derive their inspirations from the pages of Findel's "History"* that anciently there was only a single degree or step in Masonry, to which "New Men"—operative and non-operative alike—were admitted, in a single ceremony. A copy of the old Manuscript Constitution was read, together with a quantity of operative regulations, which the candidate swore to obey.

Such a custom, one might think, if it generally existed, must have been one of the utmost notoriety, and therefore certain to be included among the matters of common fame which were disclosed to the public in the surreptitious catechisms. But the entire series of these productions will be vainly searched for the slightest reference to the Old Constitution, the Legend of the Craft, or Operative regulations of any kind.

Upon the manner in which persons following the mason's trade were admitted into the English and Scottish Lodges respectively, in early times, I must not dwell in this article.

The practice differed in the two countries, but I am chiefly concerned with the usage prevailing in the Lodges either wholly or mainly composed of speculative or non-operative masons, whose proceedings, rather than those of the operative class, will, unless my judgment is at fault, be found to be reflected, (almost) exclusively, though withal dimly, in the early catechisms.

That the legendary history of Masonry was read to "New Men" who were members of the Mason's trade, and their obedience signified on oath to a number of operative regulations, prior to their admission as Freemasons, may be inferred from the entries in the rolls and scrolls, presumably in the custody of English Lodges, long ago extinct, which have come down to us. It is also well known that a form of the Old Constitutions, locally styled the *Measson Charter*, was read (or directed to be read) to the candidate at his making, in the Lodge of Aberdeen. But *Exceptio probat regulam*.

The "rule" in the Northern Kingdoms with regard to the observance of this custom, as may be gathered from the ample store of early records possessed by the Scottish Lodges, was of a negative character, to which the practice at Aberdeen constituted the solitary exception.

* J. G. Findel, *History of Freemasonry*, p. 150.

It is not, indeed to be supposed, that Nicholas Stone, Elias Ashmole, Randle Holme, and the other English speculative Freemasons of the seventeenth century, were received into the Society with an absence of all formality except the recital of a legend, and an obligation to behave decently and properly as (adopted) members of the Mason's trade. Such a course of procedure is nowhere indicated in any documentary evidence whatever. There are indeed no minutes or other records of English Lodges to refer to, which are of earlier date than the eighteenth century, but if the proceedings in these Lodges can be deemed to be reflected, however faintly, in the family of "Disclosures," then their uniform silence with respect to the existence of any operative reception of the kind, will point in the direction of all the ceremonies being speculative or symbolical, which they profess to describe.

All that we know on unimpeachable authority with regard to the reception of candidates by the Old Lodge at York, in the twilight of the seventeenth, and dawn of the eighteenth century, is, that they were "admitted and sworn," and of this speculative usage there is something more than a faint echo in the spurious rituals of later date.

II.

The earliest group of spurious rituals to which dates of publication can be positively assigned, comprises the *Mason's Examination* (1723), the *Grand Mystery of Freemasonry Discovered* (1724), and the *Mystery of Free-Masonry* (1730). These, which are English productions, can be consulted at any ordinary Masonic library. There is another group, however, of rituals of the same class in which the Scottish dialect predominates, and to whose respective periods of origin no other clues are afforded than can be gathered from their contents. Both of these groups are referred to with some particularity in the present volume (XI. and XII.), but it is to the latter that the observations I am about to make will chiefly be confined. *Sloane MS.*, 3,329. was analyzed with great minuteness by the late Rev. A. F. A. Woodford, who believed it to date from about the middle of the seventeenth century. But the judgment I am inclined to pass upon the MS. is that while parts of it are older than 1723, the document in its existing form was compiled or put together after that year. The MS. has several features of interest, and a close comparison will show that many entries which occur in other Scottish "Catechisms" are to be found among its contents.

Dumfries Kilwinning MS. formed the subject of an intelligent study by the late Mr. John Lane, who considered that it probably dated not earlier than 1730 or later than 1740.* The manuscript may be described as being peculiar rather than instructive, and it yields no information that calls for special remark.

There remain three unauthorised rituals, all of which are highly flavoured with the Scottish idiom. The *Trinity College, Dublin*, and the *Chetwode Crawley MSS.* and the well-known pamphlet, *Masonry Dissected* (1730). With the last-named, however, I am scarcely concerned in the present study, for it proclaims a system of three degrees, and I am dealing with the period of time antecedent to 1728—under which year we learn for the first time on authority admitting of no dispute, that the degrees of Apprentice, Fellow Craft, and Master Mason, were worked as separate and distinct Steps of Masonry by any persons in the world. This incident will be related in its proper place, and I pass to the two manuscripts in Irish custody, neither of which has yet appeared in a printed form.

The Trinity College MS.—This came into the archives of Trinity College, Dublin, in 1733, on the death of Sir Thomas Molyneux, and is endorsed "Freemasonry, February, 1711." The other papers with it (of the same family) appear, I am informed, to have been arranged with regard to chronological order, and none of these are of later date than 1718. The age of the MS. cannot, however, be determined with any approach to exactitude by the character of the handwriting, and the "endorsement" of course counts for nothing at all. Three Masters, three Fellow Crafts, and nine entered Apprentices, are mentioned as constituting a full and perfect Lodge. Three degrees are plainly and unequivocally referred to, and the MS., therefore, may be of any date between 1723 and 1733.

The Chetwode Crawley MS.—This writing, which it will be convenient to refer to as far as possible under the title of the "*C.C.MS.*," was found amongst a batch of books, in the leaves of one, which had come in from some bookseller in Scotland and laid aside for a long time. Neither the bookseller's name, nor that of the town, could be traced. A long time was spent by the private collector into whose hands the MS. had fallen (and from whom the particulars I am now giving are derived) in an endeavour to ascertain its

* A.Q.C., vi., 36.

age. Various authorities were consulted, including the staff of the MS. Department in the British Museum, but the general verdict was, that the watermark was one that covered such a long range of time as to render it practically of little value in fixing the date, even approximately, of the document.

The MS. was subsequently acquired by the library of the Grand Lodge of Ireland, through the instrumentality of the late Mr. W. J. Hughan, by whom a short description of the writing was given in the Transactions of the Quatuor Coronati Lodge.*

It passed into the custody, where it now reposes, in 1904. The opening page of the MS. describes the contents as being "The Grand Secret, or The forme of giving the Mason-Word."

Between the text of the document and that of the *Mason's Examination* (1723), which contains the oldest *English* illicit ritual of assured date, there are so many points of similarity as to justify the presumption that they are derived from some common original in the more remote past.

For example, in the "C.C." MS. we meet with: "Here am I, the youngest and last entered apprentice, as I am sworn by God and St. John, by the Square and compass and common judge." While in the English catechism of 1723 there occurs:

"Q. What makes a just and perfect Lodge?"

"A. A Master, two wardens, four fellows, five apprentices, with square, compass, and Common Gudge."

With the exception of the words, "Five apprentices," a precisely similar "Question" and "Answer" appear in the *Mystery of Free-Masonry* (also an English production) printed in 1730, and in all three instances the phrase which has been corrupted into "Common Judge," or "Gudge," would doubtless be found in some older catechism under the simpler wording of the "Common Gauge."

The *Mystery of Free-Masonry* (1730) also has the following: "Until you have passed the Master's part, you are only an entered apprentice."

And in the "C.C." MS. the apprentice is likewise plainly told that what has been communicated to him belongs to the first degree, but that to a Master Mason or Fellow Craft (the words being used as convertible terms) there is more to be revealed. The "C.C." MS. though undoubtedly of English parentage, has assumed to some considerable extent a Scottish attire, yet not sufficiently so, in my own judgment, to warrant the inference that it is to be classed among the mushroom creations which in the guise of alleged Masonic "Revelations," made their appearance after 1723. Like the English Catechisms which I have last referred to (the *Mason's Examination* and the *Mystery of Free-Masonry*) it contains a text or reading which even in its present corrupted form is of earlier date and may possibly stretch back to the first half of the seventeenth century.

We learn from actual Lodge records that two steps or degrees of Masonry were known and practised in Scotland during the first decade of the eighteenth century, and confirmation of this usage, from any other source whatever, is therefore unneeded; but as the proceedings of Lodges have always attained a certain measure of publicity, it will be natural to conclude that an echo of such proceedings would inevitably find its way into the writings of the journalist and pamphleteer. Some customs of the early Scottish Masons, were doubtless communicated to the world through one of these channels and some through the other.

Two steps of Masonry, those of Apprentice and Fellow Craft or Master Mason, are mentioned in the "C.C." MS., and the two grades or classes of Masons, are further distinguished (as in other productions of the same kind) by the Apprentice being taught to say that he has been in the Kitchen, and the Fellow Craft or Master that he has been in the Hall. There is also a catechism, or series of interrogatories, numbering a score, the fifth of which has:

"Q. What makes a true and perfect lodge?"

"A. Seven Masters, five Apprentices, a day's journey from a borrows towne without bark of a dog or crow of a cock."

There are two other putative revelations which must be separately referred to. They were made public on known dates, some years after a tri-gradal system of degrees had been officially recognised by the Grand Lodge of England in its *Book of Constitutions*, 1738. But their readings or texts are supposed (with good reason) to reflect the customs of a much older period of time faintly or indeed almost imperceptibly in the one instance, but with less obscurity in the other.

* A.Q.C., xvii., p. 91.

To take the latter first, *The Mason's Confession* was printed in 1755*, and professed to deal with matters that took place in 1727. It is an anonymous production of great length, and in its general term is suggestive of a form of reception, in which the customs, on such occasions of the operative as well as the Speculative Masons were curiously blended. The "Secrets of the Mason Word," it directs, should be given on St. John's Day, "on the top of a mountain, away from the crow of a cock or the bark of a dog, or the turtle of a dove."

Like the *Sloane MS.*, 3,329, the *Mason's Confession* presents a composite text, a part of it relating to customs which preceded the dawn of historical Masonry and the remainder being of much later date.

Annexed to the *Mason's Confession* in the *Scots Magazine*, is a reference to proceedings which purport to form a real "Confession," and are duly attested by the parties concerned. These proceedings are fully given in another channel of publication,† where they are described as *The Protestation and Declinature*, from the Society of Operative Masons in the Lodge of Torpichen, to meet at Livingstone Kirk, December 27th, 1739."

The sinfulness of taking the Mason's Oath is dwelt upon at tedious length and with wearisome iteration, as a prelude to the "revelations," which, on the other hand, are of so meagre a character, as to lead to a train of thought, in which like a mocking critic of our Society in the early Georgian age, we are disposed to wonder whether a man can be said to be sacrilegiously perjured for revealing secrets when he has none.‡

An oath is stated to have been taken both at the admission of an entered Apprentice, and of a Fellow Craft. Only Operative Masons were to be received, but this rule was often broken. The mis-spending of precious time and money on superstitious observances on St. John's Day is mentioned. Also that at the entry of a man to the Lodge, no fewer than two fellow crafts and four entered Apprentices should be present; "which obligation," it is added, "has been broken."

The "Protestation" was subscribed by Charles Crystic, who describes the practices referred to, as having occurred when he was young, at Kirk Newton, on December 27th, 1739, and was subsequently "approved"—July 27th, 1747—by four others, one of whom, speaks of his Approbation as a renunciation of the Mason Word.

III.

James Anderson—A.M., afterwards D.D.—a graduate of Marischal College, Aberdeen, and presumably a member of the Old Lodge in that City, was entrusted by the Grand Lodge of England, September 29th, 1721, with the task of "digesting" the "Old Gothic" (or manuscript) Constitutions. In the same year, Dr. William Stukeley was admitted a member of the Society—January 6th—and he tells us in his diary: "I was the first person made a Freemason in London for many years. We had great difficulty to find members enough to perform the ceremony. Immediately upon that it took a run, and ran itself out of breath through the folly of its members."

The names of these two men would furnish texts from which very lengthy disquisitions on the revival of Masonry, after a protracted period of decay, might be written. But the court of history has the habit of taking judicial notice of matters of common repute, which cannot be specially pleaded before it. The topic with which I am dealing can present few attractions, except to advanced students of the Craft, and to such brethren it would be superfluous and unnecessary to recite for their information a number of established facts in the history of our Society, with which, however essential to be carefully borne in mind during the inquiry we are pursuing, their previous studies will have made them familiar.

It is common knowledge that Dr. Anderson was the author of the English *Books of Constitutions*, 1723 and 1738, and that in the first of these publications he introduced—into Old Regulation XIII.—some Scottish terms the appearance of which in the volume led to singular confusion and gave general offence.

The doctor, it will be remembered, is reasonably supposed to have been made a Mason in the Lodge of Aberdeen, the Laws and Statutes of this Lodge, in 1670, and the names of its members from the same year (though not an unbroken record) are still in existence. §

* Scot's Magazine, xvii., p. 133.

† Magistracy settled upon its only true Scriptural basis M.D.C.C. XLVII, p. 238.

‡ Robert Samber, in "Ebrietatis Encomium; or, The Praise of Drunkenness, 1723" wherein is authentically and most evidently proved, The Necessity of frequently getting Drunk; and, That the Practice of getting Drunk is most Antient, Primitive, and Catholic. Confirmed by the Example of Heathens, Turks, Infidels, Primitive Christians, Saints, Popes, Bishops, Doctors, Philosophers, Poets Free Masons, and other Men of Learning in all Ages,

§ Lyon.—Hist. Lodge of Edinburgh, p. 448.

Master Mason and Fellow Craft (or Fellow of Craft) are used as convertible terms in the Aberdeen Regulations, and this grade or title comprehended all those brethren above the rank of Entered Apprentice, an expression which occurs with frequency in the laws.

The Masters (or Fellow Crafts) were, and the Entered Apprentices were not, members of the Lodge.

From the Laws of 1670, I extract the following :—“ Wee ordaine ... that no lodge be holden within a dwelling house where there is people living in it, but in the open fields, except it be ill weather, and then let a house be chosen that no person heir or sic us.

“ Wee ordaine lykwayes that all entering prentices be entered in our ancient outfield Lodge, in the meannes in the Parish of Negg, at the stonniees at the poynt of the Ness.”

The custom of holding Lodge meetings in the open air must, at a period still further removed from our own, have been a very frequent one. The belief in the existence of such a practice was evidently widely spread, and it is freely reflected in the whole series of revelations and disclosures. Of this, several examples have been already given, and two more will now be added.

The first, from the *Mason's Examination*, (1723) :

“ Q. Where was you made ?

“ A. In the Valley of Jehosophet, behind a Rush-bush, where a Dog was never heard to bark, or cock crow, or elsewhere.”

The second, from the *Dumfries Kilwinning MS.* :

“ Q. Where ought a Lodge to be kept ?

“ A. On the top of a mountain or in ye middle of a boge without the hearing of ye crowing of a cok or ye bark of a doge.”

The *Mason* (or *Masons'*) *Word*—The late Mr. D. M. Lyon tells us in his well-known work*—“ The Word is the only secret that is ever referred to in any of the early minutes of the Scottish Lodges which he had examined, but he goes on to explain that the expression was largely a figure of speech, as the “ Secrets of the Mason Word ” are referred to in the minutes of the Lodge of Dunblane and in those of the Lodge at Haughfoot, it is stated that the Word was accompanied by a grip. A further allusion by the same writer to the records of the former of these Lodges, will be best given in his own words :—

“ In the minutes of the Lodge of Dunblane, between the years 1720 and 1726, we find a peculiarity of expression in recording the advancement of entered apprentices that we have never met with in any other Masonic MS. It first occurs in the minute of December 27th, 1720, in which a writer (lawyer) who had formerly been entered, is mentioned as having after examination been “ duely passed *from the Squair to the Compass* and from ane Entered Prentise to a Fellow of Craft.” It would appear from this that what under the modern ritual of the Fraternity is a symbol peculiar to the Second Degree, was, under the system which obtained in Scotland prior to the introduction of the Third Degree, the distinctive emblem of the Entered Apprentice step ; and what is now a leading symbol in the degree of Master Mason was then indicative of the Fellow Craft, or highest grade of Lodge membership. To some this will appear to favour the theory which attributes the existence of the Third Degree to a disjunction and rearrangement of the parts of which the Second was originally composed. It is also worthy of notice that a square and a compass were the only implements that were in use in the Lodge of Dunblane up till 1753, the date of the last inventory of its property prior to its joining the Grand Lodge in 1761, when batons and other paraphernalia were procured.”†

From the minutes of the Lodge of Dunblane I pass to those of the Old Lodge at Haughfoot, from which we gain, as Mr. Lyon has been careful to point out, a little more information than is given in any other Scottish Masonic records with respect to what was comprised in the expression :—“ The Communication of the Mason Word.”

The customs of the Lodge at Haughfoot have been frequently described,‡ and perhaps with the greatest insight into their real meaning by the late Mr. John Yarker, in the Transactions of the Quatuor Coronati Lodge.§

The first Minute Book, from which the earlier pages are missing, commences abruptly with the date of “ 22nd Dec., 1702 : “ Of entrie as the apprentice did leaving out (the common Judge). Then they whisper the word as before—and the Master Mason grips his hand in the ordinary way.

* Hist. of Lodge of Edinburgh, p. 23.

† Lyon, p. 82. ‡ R. Sanderson in the *Freemason's Magazine*, 1869 and 1870. Vernon, *Hist. of F. in Roxburghshire and Selkirkshire*. § A.Q.C., XVI., p. 177.

The same day Sir James Scott of Gala, Thomas Scott his brother [and others] gave in their petitions each for themselves earnestly desiring to be admitted into the Society of Masons and Fellow Craft . . . and they each of them by themselves were duly and orderly admitted apprentices and fellow Craft."

In the next entry, which is dated Jan. 14th, 1704, power was given to any five of the members to enter duly qualified persons either as apprentices or fellow craft.

The founders of the Lodge—which never affiliated with the Grand Lodge—were the neighbouring gentry and their retainers, and the lairds are referred to in the records by the titles of their lands instead of by their family names. The minutes extend from 1702 to 1763, and during that period the Lodge met at Haughfoot, Galashiels, and Selkirk. The meetings took place on St. John's Day (in winter), and the degrees conferred were those of Apprentice and Fellow Craft or Master, these being at first given on the same day, but after 1707, at an interval of a year between the former and the latter.

A Commission of five was appointed every year to admit "intrants." a practice that may have existed in other Scottish Lodges of the period.

The number of Masons necessary to constitute regularity at the reception of a new member is a common feature of the various catechisms, and one of them, *Sloane MS.* 3,329, after stating that a true and perfect Lodge consists of six persons, goes on to say: "more or fewer, the more the merrier, the fewer the better cheer, but if need require, five will serve."

We have in these minutes the clearest proof that there was a plurality of Masonic steps or degrees in Scotland before the era of Grand Lodges, though the extent to which these were known and practised, must, in the absence of further evidence of an equally unimpeachable character, remain largely a matter of conjecture. The Haughfoot Minutes inform us, indeed, under the date of "14th Jan., 1704," that a visitor was examined and found to be a true entered apprentice and fellow craft; and the two degrees, under the popular title of the Mason Word, may have existed as separate and distinct entities for a much longer period of time, and may have been conferred in more of the early Scottish Lodges than the generality of our Masonic teachers will be prepared to admit.

Yet some questions could be asked to which they might experience a little difficulty in replying. For example:—

Are we to assume that the "examination of visitors" took a wider range of inquiry in the Lodges of Haughfoot and Dunblane, than was the case when the learned Dr. Desaguliers was "received as a brother into their societie," by the Deacons, Wardens, and Master Masons of Edinburgh, on him proving himself to be "duly qualified in all points of Masonry," at "Maries Chapel," in 1721?

From what other Scottish source, if it was not the Lodge of Aberdeen, did James Anderson derive the degrees of Apprentice and Fellow Craft (or Master) which he must undoubtedly have possessed when the manuscript of his first "*Book of Constitutions*" was sent to the press? and

Of the whole number of Geomatic Masons admitted as Fellow Crafts in Scottish Lodges during the seventeenth and the first quarter of the eighteenth centuries, were none of them, except at Haughfoot and Dunblane, instructed in what was then the second (and final) step of the Speculative Craft, or "Masters' Part"?

I am of opinion that the symbolic grades of apprentice and Fellow or Master were known in English, and those of Entered Apprentice and Fellow Craft or Master in Scottish Masonry during the seventeenth century and probably earlier, a conclusion in which I am fortified by many passages in the unauthorised rituals, which, while imparting very little that is *new*, confirm (as matters of public notoriety) what we already know (on evidence altogether free from suspicion) to be *old*.

The evidence relating to the steps or degrees of Masonry anciently known and practised in Britain has come down to us in two channels, a Scottish and an English one. But it will be sufficient for my purpose in the present paper to instance the records of the Haughfoot Lodge as affording an example of what may be legitimately inferred from the former source, and those of the London Lodge of 1727*—already referred to—as supplying information of an equally authentic and valuable character from the other. These records, which are mutually confirmatory, show that the degrees conferred in the two Lodges were precisely the same, but there is a difference in describing them, that merits our close attention. The word "Fellow Craft" which is used in its Scottish sense of "Master" in the Haughfoot

* A.Q.C., X, p. 128.

Minutes, is not mentioned at all, nor is the existence of any step superior to that of Apprentice and inferior to that of Master, even so much as obscurely hinted at, in the London Minutes of 1727. The use of this expression in its English or adoptive sense of a step intermediate between the original two, undoubtedly took place in 1728, as will presently appear, and evidence may yet be forthcoming to show its employment in a similar capacity at a slightly earlier date. But the noteworthy point which may be laid down for the guidance of those to whom the study of the unauthorized rituals of Masonry is unfamiliar, is, that whenever the word "fellow craft" is used in any one of them except as the equivalent to "Master" the manuscript or pamphlet which contains it may be regarded with certainty as having been compiled after the publication of the first English *Book of Constitutions*, in 1723.

For a reference to the earliest known minutes of the three degrees of Masonry, as we now have them, in the Minutes of a Lodge, I am indebted to my friend, Dr. W. Begemann, of Berlin, by whom it was discovered in the summer of last year, while conducting a laborious investigation of the records of the Scottish Craft.

In a letter dated September 16th, 1912, the Doctor writes:—"James Smith has the notice on the third degree in his pamphlet on *Freemasonry in Galloway*. The Lodge St. Cuthbert's, Kilwinning, worked the degree on the 7th of February, 1735; I find a much earlier date of raised 'Master Masons' in the minutes of the Lodge Greenock, Kilwinning, at Greenock, a number of brethren founded a Lodge here on the 27th of December, 1728, and agreed on 6 Regulations of which the third settles the fees for entering, passing and raising.

"3rd. That each who shall be received Member of this Lodge shall pay into the Box when *Entered* an Apprentice, One pound, ten shillings, scotts. 12 shillings when *past* fellow craft, and twenty shillings scotts when *raised* Master Mason, besides paying the expense of the Night's entertainment."

Therefrom it is clear that on the 27th December, 1728, the degree of a Master Mason as a sundry degree was known at Greenock. At the head of the first minute five of the founders are called "Master Masons," three "fellow Crafts," and two "Entered Prentices." They chose a Master, one Warden and a Box master, and agreed on the six Regulations.

On the 27th December, 1729, a visitor was examined upon the Entered Apprentice, the fellow Craft and Master Masons degrees"; they found him to be true. On the 27th December, 1734, there was a visitor from Kilmarnock Kilwinning who was likewise examined and received. On the same day for the first time a Senior and a Junior Warden were chosen, also a Steward.

From these evidences it is clear, that the third degree already about 1728 was known and worked in the western part of Scotland. Perhaps the five Master Masons of the 27th December, 1728, had been raised somewhere in England, for it is curious that the prentices and fellow crafts of the Lodge in Greenock were not passed and raised, as no mention thereof is to be found in the minutes. The first making of an Entered Apprentice is mentioned on the 23rd February, 1736, and the same person was past to the Degree of a "Fellow Craft" on the 24th June, 1736, and raised to the degree of a Master Mason on the 12th August, 1736. Therefore this was the first real raising in the Lodge itself."

It would appear to myself to be at least a plausible conjecture that the speculative Masonry of the seventeenth century, must have been devoid of much of the ritual and ceremonial which has since gathered round it. It may of course have been the other way, but the general decay into which the Society had fallen, when it first emerges into the light of history, does not in my own judgment so much import that ancient forms and ceremonies had disappeared, as that the symbols of an unrecorded past were gradually dropping out of use and their meaning becoming forgotten.

There were probably always two steps of speculative Masonry, those of Apprentice and Master, and both of these, we may infer, were originally conferred on the same day, in a continuing ceremony, or as it may be otherwise expressed through the medium of a Drama, divided into two Acts.

With whatever determination a Masonic writer may enter upon his task, he will find it difficult to maintain an attitude of resolved limitation in the consideration of the subject of degrees. He must try and do so, however, as any failure in this respect may result in his becoming engulfed in speculations regarding many things which will probably be always hidden from his view.

I have endeavoured to show the true direction in which the evidence points with respect to the character of the symbolic or philosophic masonry practised in Great Britain before the sovereignty of Grand Lodges had a beginning, and must refrain from even a glance at the numerous side issues which crowd on the mind, when I am on the point of laying down my pen.

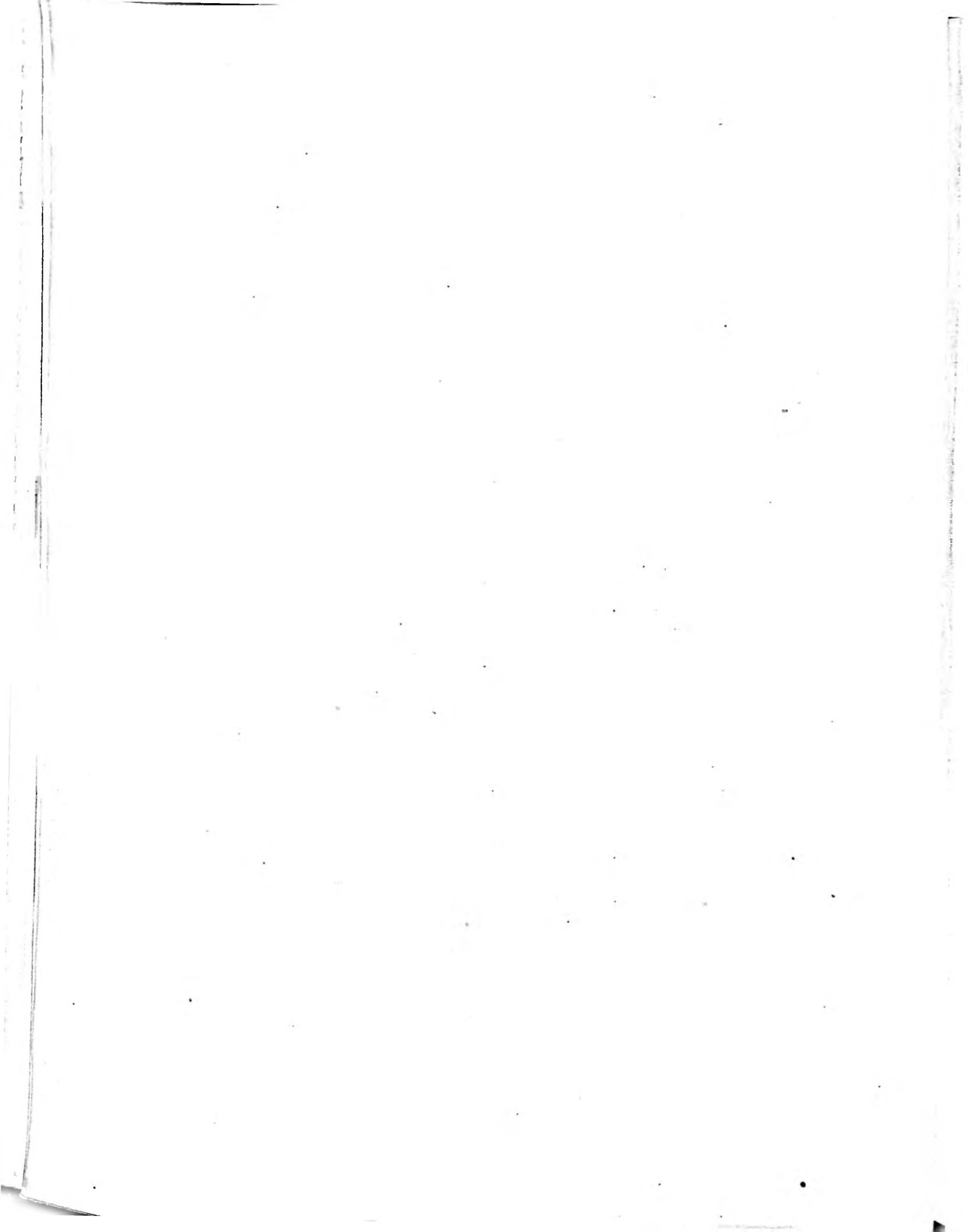
To even the most fully equipped students of Masonic symbolism there is much that will always remain obscure in the customs of the Fraternity as existing in times more or less remote from our own. But the patient inquirer, who is guided by the evidence, will find solid ground on which to rest his feet, in the conclusion to which his rightly conductive studies must inevitably lead him, that the degrees or steps of Apprentice and Master, *and no others*, were known and practised in English and Scottish Masonry long before there was either in North or South Britain a governing body of the Craft.

II.

A COMMENTARY ON THE
REGIUS MS.

(Bibl. Reg. 17. A. 1., ff. 32.—Brit. Museum).

[Quatuor Coronatorum Antigrapha—Voi. I., 1889].



THE REGIUS MS.

(*Bibl. Reg. 17 A. 1., ff. 32,—Brit. Museum*).

NOTE.—For convenience sake, and to economize space, the following abbreviations will be used throughout:—*A.Q.C.*—*Ars Quatuor Coronatorum*; *Hist.*—*Gould, History of Freemasonry*; *O.C.*—*Hughan, Old Charges*; *E.E.T.S.*—*Publications of the Early English Text Society*. With these exceptions the references to authorities will in each case give the name of the author and title of work, *when first cited*, but subsequently that of the author only, unless two works by a single writer are laid under contribution.

PROLEGOMENA.

THERE are some points of analogy between the ancient Etruscans and the modern Freemasons, to which a brief allusion will not be out of place, as a preamble to the inquiry we are about to pursue.

Judging from the arts and monuments of the former, there is no people whom we seem to know better, while the books published by the latter appear to contain all that may gratify the most ardent curiosity. Still, who the Etruscans were remains a mystery, and of "the brethren of the Royal Art" it may be affirmed with equal truth, that they let the outer world know everything about Freemasonry—except what it really is.

This ignorance, however, as we gradually ascend the river of time, the Freemasons to-day must be content to share in no slight degree with those who have not seen the light of Masonry at all, or, in other words, have not sought admission into, and been received within, the pale of the Society.

The earliest Grand Lodge—that of England—was established in 1717, and it is on the oldest document that can in any way be associated with the Masonic teachings which preceded the era of that body, and survive at this day, that I am now about to commentate. But before entering upon my task, and in order that the subject may be the more readily grasped by those readers who approach its study for the first time, some preliminary words are essential.

Among the leading objects which this Lodge has in view is the publication of all manuscripts which relate to the ancient "Constitutions," or Legends of Freemasonry, and here, at the very threshold of our inquiry, it is necessary to pause, while a survey is taken of the ground over which we are about to pass. The documents handed down from the operative Masons of Great Britain, France, and Germany, have for the most part been generically classed under the misleading title of "Constitutions," from which great confusion has resulted.

In his well-known work, "The New Book of Constitutions," 1738, being the second edition of the first printed code of regulations for the Freemasons, Dr. Anderson thus expresses himself:—"THE FREE-MASONS had always a Book in *Manuscript* call'd the *Book of Constitutions* (of which they have several very antient Copies remaining) containing not only their *Charges* and *Regulations*, but also the *History of Architecture* from the Beginning of Time; in order to show the Antiquity and Excellency of the *Craft or Art*."*

Besides these compilations, of which the majority now extant are in roll or scroll form, there are two manuscripts of higher antiquity, possessing many characteristics of the Manuscript Constitutions, and apparently derived in great part from versions or readings of them now lost to us, but which were evidently not used by Lodges at the reception of new brethren in the same way as the documents in roll or scroll form; and must be classified rather as histories of, or disquisitions upon, Geometry (or Masonry) than as "Constitutions" of the Craft or Society.

Of the Manuscript Constitutions, or as they are more frequently styled, the "Old Charges of British Freemasons," a large number are still in existence, and an exact copy of every known version, together with the references which have been made from time to time by writers to forms that are now missing (or unidentified), will be given in the third volume of this series of reprints.

These "Old Charges," to use the name that will be productive of the least confusion, were used in Lodges at the reception of new members, and the practice continued to be observed until a period overlapping the erection of the Grand Lodge of England in 1717. When the usage had its first origin is indeterminable, but the earliest version of the "Old Charges" that has come down to us, concerning the age of which, as a written document,

**Introduction*, vii.

there is no room for dispute—*Grand Lodge MS.*—dates from A.D. 1583. The two documents of higher antiquity, which I have characterised as histories or disquisitions, next take up the chain. These, to follow the ordinary sequence in which they are given when described in order of juniority, are Addl. MS. 23, 198 : and Bibl. Reg. 17 A, I.—the press-mark being in each case that of the British Museum. Both MSS. are ascribed to the first half of the fifteenth century, by Mr. E. A. Bond*, but the question of their precise age will again come before us, and I shall merely in this place lay down the postulate, which, however, will fully harmonize with the conjectures of all previous commentators, that the Bibl. Reg. MS. is the older of the two. Indeed by Woodford it was pronounced to be “the original of all our later Constitutions.”†

In this conclusion I do not concur, for reasons to be presently adduced, though as proceeding from so high an authority on the manuscript literature of the Craft, it merits, and will doubtless receive, the careful attention of those readers—and their name must be legion—who throughout a long series of years have derived instruction from the veteran Masonic writer whose decease we have had so recently to deplore.

On the point, however, of the relative antiquity of the two disquisitions or histories, I see no reason to disturb the priority which until quite recent times has always been assigned to Bibl. Reg. MS., though by an authority of the greatest weight its age has now been so far reduced, and that of the Addl. MS. increased, as to bring them virtually upon a level.

The former of these MSS. was published by Mr. J. O. Halliwell, and the latter by Mr. Matthew Cooke, with whose respective names they are often labelled, a practice, which as regards the junior document, will be followed by me in this commentary, but the distinctive title I prefer to use with relation to the senior of the two, is that of “*Regius MS.*,” as being alike indicative of the collection—“*King's*” or “*Royal Library*,” British Museum—upon whose shelves it reposes, and of its own obvious supremacy as a document of the Craft.

Halliwell and Cooke dated these manuscripts late fourteenth and late fifteenth century respectively, but a recent estimate of Mr. E. A. Bond, by pushing the former *down* and the latter *up*, has placed them, as already indicated, on a footing of equality in the matter of antiquity.‡

According to Mr. Bond, “they are both of the first half of the fifteenth century,” but as the age of the poem will be minutely considered at a later stage of these remarks, and that of the Addl. MS. in the next volume of our reprints, I shall content myself, at this point, with observing that by no expert in manuscript literature, or historian of the Craft, has the document edited by Mr. Halliwell been adjudged to be of later handwriting than that edited by Mr. Cooke.

The History of Masonry, or Legend of the Craft, is carried back to A.D. 1583, by the evidence of the Old Charges; the “*Grand Lodge*” form, or reading, of which ancient documents, having passed into its existing vehicle of transmission, or in other words having been written—*i.e.*, copied—on December 25 of that year though it hardly requires to be pointed out that the date of transcription affords but a faint clue, to the real antiquity of a text or reading contained in a manuscript.

Thus, of all the existing versions of the Old Charges, the Dowland was regarded by Woodford as representing the oldest form of the “*Constitutions*,” with the single exception of York No. 4, which latter, in the passage recognizing female membership, he considered takes us back to the Guild of Masons mentioned in the York Fabric Rolls of 1355§. Still the precise measure of antiquity our Masonic Legends or traditions are entitled to, over and above what is attested by documentary evidence, is so obviously a matter of conjecture that it would be a mere waste of time to attempt its definition.

Leaving, therefore, the Old Charges, and passing to the next group of documents in the ascending scale, we come in the first instance to the Cooke MS., and a little higher reach the Masonic poem, after which the genealogical proofs are exhausted.

These two manuscripts, though differing essentially from the previous group of documents, afford presumptive evidence of there having been—at the time from which they speak—pre-existing, or, in other words, fourteenth century Constitutions.

Here it is necessary to say, that we know absolutely nothing of either of the MSS. last cited, except what can be gathered from their actual texts. This should be carefully borne in mind, in order that we may separate the colouring of ardent imagination, or inaccurate

* Late Principal Librarian, British Museum. † *O.C.*, iv. ‡ *Hist.*, ii. 214.
§ *Hist.* i. 91 ; ii. 193 ; *O.C.*, xiii.

observation, from what is positively true and historically correct. Chasms in Masonic annals cannot be filled up by any process resembling that by which Cuvier inferred the entire form and structure of an extinct species from a bone. It is futile to suppose that the truth can be discovered by an occult faculty of historical divination, and as it has been well expressed :—" It is not enough for a historian to claim the possession of a retrospective second sight, which is denied to the rest of the world ; of a mysterious doctrine, revealed only to the initiated. Unless he can prove as well as guess ; unless he can produce evidence of the fact, after he has intuitively perceived its existence, his historical system cannot be received."*

The Regius, and in a lesser degree, the Cooke MS., have been very fancifully interpreted by historians of the Craft, from whose misplaced ingenuity much evil has resulted. This has mainly arisen from the erroneous mode in which their examination of these documents has been conducted. For it should never be forgotten that in working out Masonic History, whether by endeavouring to elucidate the meanings of ancient writings, or in any other way, we are in reality tracing a pedigree, and to obtain success we must, therefore, adhere as strictly as possible to those principles by means of which pedigrees are authenticated. The only sure way being to trace steadily backwards (or upwards), discarding as we go on everything that does not rest on the clearest and strongest available evidence, and so forging step by step the links in the chain until the origin is lost in the mists of remote antiquity.† But, if on the contrary, we proceed in the opposite direction, and commence from what we arbitrarily assume to be the fountain head, we may, indeed, construct a genealogy, but it must rest largely on conjecture, and will derive its best hope of acceptance from the credulity innate in mankind, and upon which Masonic authors are, alas, far too prone to rely.

In the inquiry we are pursuing, the Masonic Poem takes the place of the " fountain head " in the sense of affording the earliest documentary evidence with regard to the possession of either a speculative science, or a legendary history, by the mediæval Masons. This it does, by exhibiting features, clearly showing that either certain " forms " of the Old Charges, or their original elements and constituents—whether stories or recitals—must have been utilized in some way for the purposes of the compilation.

But in order to prove this point to the satisfaction of the reader, it will be necessary to essay a brief description of the class of documents so oft referred to under the title of Old Charges (or Manuscript Constitutions)—from which—or a common source of origin—it may be safely assumed that the Masonic fragments of the poem were derived.

This will take us to the second group of ancient writings—the first being the Regius and Cooke MSS.—upon which it is my purpose to glance in these prefatory remarks, and there are some others, also requiring to fall under our observation, though distinguished from the first two collections by relating no legendary history. The divisions into which the legends and the records of the building trades will be grouped or classified, are eight in number. I. The Regius and Cooke MSS. : II. The Old Charges or Manuscript Constitutions : III. The Statutes of Labourers : IV. Regulations for the Trade of Masons (London) A.D. 1356 : V. The Statute of Apprentices, A.D. 1662 : VI. Scottish Charters and Regulations : VII. German Ordinances : and VIII. French Statutes.

The subjects of the first group will be more clearly understood by the reader casting at least a cursory glance over those enumerated in the other sections. English Masonry at the date of the poem, and also when its companion—under the present system of classification—was compiled, was not only more an operation than a speculative science, but there is even some room for doubt whether the latter of these designations can be regarded as in any way applicable to it.

I. THE REGIUS MS. has strong affinities both with the documents which do, and those which do not, relate a legendary history ; being of the former in some degree the precursor, and yet preserving such a distinctly operative stamp as to be itself hardly distinguishable from the latter.

Whether Masonry always had its speculative side, in 1400 or earlier, is indeterminable, but I have elsewhere contended " There is probability, though no certainty, that it had."‡ The point, however, is one upon which authorities will differ, and I am now merely indicating the channel of research, upon which anyone who may be desirous of prosecuting an independent inquiry, will do well to embark.§

* Lewis, *Inquiry into the Credibility of the Early Roman History*, 15. † *Hist.* ii. 61. ‡ *A.Q.C.*, i. 71.

§ In addition to the various constitutions, ordinances, and statutes, which are grouped in the text, the Gateshead Charter, 1671, together with the Alnwick and Swallowwell Orders, 1701, 1730, (*Hist.* ii., 151, 261) may be usefully consulted.

II. THE OLD CHARGES, OR MANUSCRIPT CONSTITUTIONS, have already been referred to with some particularity in our *Transactions** and an exact transcript of each of them will be given in an early volume of our *Reprints*. They are divided into three parts or divisions, and of the first—the introductory prayer, declaration, or invocation—the following, taken from the Grand Lodge MS., A.D. 1583, the earliest of the series to which an exact date can be assigned, is an example:—

The mighte of the ffather of heaben and the wysedome of the glorious soonne through the grace & the goodnes of the holly ghoste y^e been three p'sons & one god be wth vs at o' beginning and give vs grace so to gou'ne vs here in o lyving that wee maye come to his blisse that neu shall have ending. Amen †

In the second part, or division—the History of Masonry, or Legend of the Guild—the numerous versions of the Old Charges are substantially in accord, though the actual variance, which on a close study will be found to exist between any two of them, has amply justified the minute and scholarly collation of these ancient documents, which with so much patient assiduity and critical acumen, has been conducted up to a certain point by Dr. Begemann, Prov. G.M., of Mecklenburg, under the “National Grand Lodge of all German Freemasons” at Berlin. It may be hoped, also, in the interests of true Masonic research, that the indefatigable student to whom I have last referred will succeed, at an early date, in bringing to a completion his most interesting and instructive labours in this branch—or as with even greater propriety it might be styled, parent stem—of our antiquities.

THE LEGEND OF THE GUILD opens with a recital of the seven liberal sciences—Grammar, Rhetorick, Dialectick (or Logick), Arithmetick, Geometry (or Masonry), Musick, and Astronomy—all of which, however, are declared to have either been founded by, or to be comprehended in, one science—that is to say, Geometry.

It then proceeds to narrate that before Noah's flood, Lamech (the son of Methusael), took unto himself two wives, one of whom was called Adah, and the other Zillah. The former bare two sons—Jabal and Jubal—and the latter a son and a daughter—Tubal-Cain and Naamah. These four children founded all the crafts and sciences, and being forewarned of the impending destruction of the world, wrote their discoveries on two distinct pillars, which possessed such peculiar properties that one would not sink, nor the other burn, and so were equally capable of resisting the action of either fire or water. After the flood, one (or both) of these pillars‡ was found by Hermes, the son of Cush, who was the grandson of Noah—and is known as the father of wise men. The knowledge thus acquired he taught to others, and at the building of the tower of Babel it came into great request under the name of Masonry. Nimrod, the king of Babylon, was himself a Mason, and sent sixty Masons, to whom he gave certain charges, to assist in the building of Nineveh.

After this Abraham and Sarah his wife went into Egypt, where they taught the seven sciences to the Egyptians; and Abraham had a worthy scholar who was called Euclid.

In his days the sons of the lords and great people, both lawfully and unlawfully begotten, had become so numerous that there was no competent livelihood for them. Therefore a proclamation was made offering a reward to any person who could find a way of maintaining them; wherefore Euclid said to the King and his lords, if you will give me your children to govern, I will teach them one of the seven sciences, whereby they may live honestly like gentlemen, provided you will grant me the power to rule them. Then his commission being granted and sealed, the worthy clerk Euclid took to him these Lords' sons, and taught them the science of Geometry. And he gave them charges to which he made them swear a great oath that men used in that time. Thus was the science founded there, and Euclid gave it the name of Geometry, or as it is now called throughout the land, Masonry.

Long after, King David began the Temple of Jerusalem, and he loved Masons well, and gave them charges, and at his death Solomon finished the Temple that his father had begun, and sent for workmen into many countries, there being a king of another region Iram (or Hiram), who supplied him with materials, and whose son, Aymon (or Aynon), was chief Master of the work.

* A.Q.C., i., 69.

† Sadler, *Masonic Facts and Fictions*, 199.

‡ According to the Cooke MS. (lines 318-26), quoting from the *Policronicon*, Pythagoras discovered one pillar and Hermes the other.

At this time curious craftsmen walked about full wide in divers countries ; some to learn more craft and cunning, others to teach them that had but little cunning.*

So it befel that there was one curious Mason called Naymus Grecus, who had been at the building of King Solomon's temple, and came to France, where he taught the science of Masonry to Charles Martel.

England, in all this season, stood void of Masonry until St. Alban's time, who loved Masons well, and made their pay right good, and got them a charter from the King, and his Council to hold a General Council, and gave it the name of Assembly, and thereat he was himself, and made Masons, and gave them charges.

After the decease of St. Alban the good rule of Masonry was destroyed until the time of King Athelstan, who loved Masons well, but whose son Edwin loved Masons much more than his father did. And for the love he had to Masons and the Craft, he was made a Mason himself, and got of the King, his father, a Charter and Commission to hold every year an Assembly or Council, wheresoever himself, with the Masons, would, within the Realms of England, to correct the faults and trespasses that were done in the Craft. And he held himself an Assembly at York, and made Masons and gave them charges. And when the Assembly was met, he made a cry that all Masons, old or young, who had any writings or understandings of the Charges and the Manners concerning the science, that were before in this land, or in any other land, they should bring them forth, and some were found in Greek, Hebrew, Latin, French, English, and other languages. These were all to one intent, and a book was made thereof, showing how the Craft was founded, and he bade and commanded that it should be read or told when any Mason was made, and to give them the Charge.

The third and last section of each version of the Old Charges or Manuscript Constitutions consists of the regulations and observances which every newly admitted Mason was required to swear on the "Booke" that he would maintain and uphold. These are generally divided into paragraphs, and the first in order invariably is the injunction—"To be true to God and the Holy Church," which corresponds with "Point" I. of the Poem, and the remainder of the Charges in the prose forms will be found, with hardly an exception, among the Articles and Points of the Regius MS.

In the above summary, I have endeavoured to give what I trust may be found a typical representation of the class of writings comprised in Group II. Each Family, and in a reduced ratio, each Version, of the Old Charges, is in its way unique ; though the specialities or singularities of the one are derived, as it were, from within, and of the other from without. Both of these, however, will be fully considered in a later volume of this series, and I shall merely notice a few of the variant readings, that cannot be wholly passed over without sensibly curtailing the preliminary information, which it is the object of this introduction to impart.

Thus, according to the Lansdown Family, Edwin was made a Mason at Windsor—which has been relied upon by some critics as destructive of the alleged supremacy of York. The "writings," moreover, produced in obedience to the same Prince's command, at the York Assembly, are not enumerated alike in all versions of the Old Charges. Those in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek are each of them not specified in several forms, while in one (*Tunnah*), the statement regarding the "writings or understandings of the science" in the vernacular tongue is curiously enough omitted. But the most singular variance of all is the allusion to Hiram Abiff in the Spencer Family, a class or division of comparatively late transcription and of very doubtful authority. "The widow's son of Tyre," is not referred to in any other versions of the Manuscript Constitutions, a circumstance upon which I have elsewhere based an argument that he could not have figured very prominently in the oral, or his name would have appeared in the written traditions of the seventeenth century.† This contention has been fortified by a criticism, equally exhaustive and destructive, of the Spencer group, from the pen of Dr. Begemann, which recently appeared in our *Transactions*.‡ Another very important departure from, or non-agreement with, what may be termed the normal text, occurs on two of the three forms comprising the Roberts Family, but upon this I shall again touch, at a later point.

* At this point of the narrative, in four versions of the Old Charges—comprising the Spencer Family, under the classification of Dr. Begemann—there comes in an allusion to the destruction of the First Temple, by Nebuchadnezzar, who, however, is not otherwise mentioned in any one of these ancient documents, nor in the Cooke MS., which partly bridges over the chasm of years between the oldest (*dated*) form of the Manuscript Constitutions, (*Grand Lodge*) and the Masonic Poem.

† *Hist.* ii., 244, 365. ‡ *A.Q.C.*, vol. i., p. 152.

Attention will next be invited to certain Rules in the Old Charges (normal text) which are not given in the poem.

To call all Masons, Fellows, or brethren, and no foul names.*

No Master or Fellow to make anyone a Mason without the assent and counsel of 5 or 6 of his Fellows.†

A Master to take no apprentice without he has sufficient occupation for him, or to set 3 of his fellows, or 2 at the least, on work.

That no Master or Fellow put away any Lord's work to task that ought to be journey work.

That every Mason shall reverence his elders.

That a Mason be no common player at cards, dice, or hazard.

That no Fellow go into the town of a night time without a witness to bear record that he was in an honest place.

No Mason to make moulds, stone, square, or rule to any rough layer, or to set any layer within or without the Lodge, to hew or mould stone of his own making.

A Mason not to pay for work improperly executed.

Disputes or differences between Masons to be settled, if possible, without resorting to the common law.

To receive and cherish strange Fellows and set them on work, or refresh them to the next Lodge.

Newly-admitted brethren to be sworn on the "Booke."

The following is a complete list of the various "forms" of the Manuscript Constitutions that are in actual existence or to which there is any known reference at the present time of writing. Many of them have been published by Hughan in his "Masonic Sketches and Reprints" (1871), "Old Charges of British Freemasons" (1872), and other publications; while not a few lie scattered in the now defunct *Masonic Magazine*. In the works cited will be found the largest collections of these interesting documents, but one of, and perhaps the most useful single form of, the entire series, will be found in a recent publication ‡; the price of which renders it accessible to every class of readers. Another instructive exemplar of the "Old Constitutions" has also been placed within easy reach in the work cited below, § where also, by referring to the index, a full description of every version known down to March, 1887—including place of custody and channel of publication, is given in detail. The subsequent additions are shewn in italics on the present list, and of these it will be sufficient to say that their leading characteristics have been printed in the *Freemason*, || as well as in the *Transactions* ¶ of this Lodge. Three MSS. in the present table appear under new titles, though their positions on the former numerical list have not been varied. These, which in each case are distinguished by an asterisk, are the *Phillipps* (formerly the *Wilson*) Nos. 1 and 2, and the *Clerke* (formerly *Supreme Council* No. 2). Of the last-named an exact copy has been printed by Hughan in the *Freemason*.** The "Wilson" MS., now scheduled with other missing versions in Class III., and also shewn in italics, is a *lost form* of which the present "Phillips" documents (Nos. 1 and 2) were supposed until lately to be the representatives.

CALENDAR OF THE "OLD CHARGES," 1889.

I.—MANUSCRIPT VERSIONS.

No.	NAME.	DATE.	CUSTODY.	PUBLISHED.
1	Lansdowne	16th century	British Museum	O.C.
2	Grand Lodge	1583	G. L. of England	O.C. and Sadler
3	York, No. 1	17th century	York Lodge, No. 236	O.C. and Mas. Mag., Aug. 1873
4	Phillipps, No. 1*	idem	Rev. J. E. A. Fenwick, Cheltenham	Mas. Mag., Ap., 1876
5	" No. 2*	idem	idem	N.P. Virtually a copy of No. 4
6	Inigo Jones	1607	Prov. G. L. of Worcestershire	Mas. Mag., July, 1881
7	Wood	1610	idem	ibid June, 1881
8	Harleian, 1942	17th century	British Museum	Freem. Quat. Rev., 1836; and O.C.
9	" 2054	idem	idem	Mas. Sketches; and Mas. Mag., 1873

* Partially covered by the preamble, (ll. 47-50) but not included among the Articles or Points of the Regius MS.

† The numbers vary, and in some forms clearly refer to the years of apprenticeship.

‡ Sadler, *loc. cit.* § *Hist.* i. 93. || xxi., 100, 114, 184, 318, 403, and 476. ¶ i., 127.

** xxi., 64, 81.

CALENDAR OF THE "OLD CHARGES," 1888.

MANUSCRIPT VERSIONS.—*Continued.*

No	NAME.	DATE.	CUSTODY.	PUBLISHED.
10	Sloane, 3848	1646	idem	O.C. ; and Mas. Mag., 1873
11	„ 3323	1659	idem	Mas. Sketches
12	Lechmero	17th century	Sir E. A. H. Lechmere, Bart.	Masonic Monthly, Dec., 1882
13	Buchanan	idem	G. L. of England	Hist. i., chap. ii.
14	Kilwinning	idem	Mother Kilwinning Lodge	Lyon Hist., L. of Edinburgh ; and Masonic Sketches
15	Acheson-Haven	1666	G. L. of Scotland	Laurie, 1859 ; and Lyon, 1873
16	Aberdeen	1670	Aberdeen Lodge, No. 34	Voice of Masonry, Dec., 1874
17	Melroso, No. 2	1674	Lodge of Melrose	Mas. Mag., Jan., 1880
18	Hope	17th century	Hope Lodge, No. 302	O.C.
19	York, No. 5	idem	York Lodge, No. 236	Mas. Mag., August, 1881
20	„ No. 6	idem	idem	ibid March, 1880
21	Colne, No. 1	idem	Royal Lancashire Lodge, No. 116	Freemason, Christmas No., 1887
22	Antiquity	1686	Lodge of Antiquity, No. 2	O.C.
23	Clerke*	1686	Col. S. H. Clerke, G.S.	Freemason, 4th February, 1888
24	Dautesy	17th century	R. Dautesey, Agecroft Hall, Manchester	Keystone (U.S.A.), Mar. 20th, 1886
25	York, No. 4	1693	York Lodge, No. 236	Masonic Sketches
26	Colne, No. 2	18th century	Royal Lancashire Lodge, No. 116	N.P. A copy of No. 21
27	Alnwick	1701	[]	O.C.
28	York, No. 2	1704	York Lodge, No. 236	Masonic Sketches
29	Scarborough	1705	G. L. of Canada	Canadian Craftsman, Feb., 1874
30	Stanley	1713-14	Fred. Stanley, Margate	Mas. Mag., Sept., 1879
31	Papworth	1714	Wyatt Papworth, London	N.P.
32	Spencer	1726	E. T. Carson, Cincinnati	O.C.
33	Woodford	1728	Quatuor Coronati Lodge, No. 2076	Spencer's Old Constitutions, 1871
34	Supreme Council	idem	33, Golden Square, London	N.P.
35	Gateshead	1730	Lodge of Industry, No. 48	idem
36	Rawlinson	1730	Bodleian Library	Mas. Mag., Sept., 1875
37	Harris	18th century	Bodford Lodge, No. 157	Freemason's Mag., 1855
38	Probity	idem	Lodge of Probity, No. 61	Mas. Mag., Sept., 1876
39	Cama	idem	Quatuor Coronati Lodge, No. 2076	Freemason's Chronicle, Ap., 1882
40	Phillipps, No. 3	idem	Rev. J. E. A. Fenwick, Choltenham	Freemason, Jan. and Feb., 1886
41	Melrose, No. 3	1762	Lodge of Melrose	N.P.
42	Crane	1781	Cestrian Lodge, No. 425	idem. A copy of No. 17
43	Harris, No. 2	1781	British Museum	Freemason, Oct. and Nov., 1884
44	Tunnah	1828	W. J. Hughan, Torquay	N.P.
45	Wren	1852	[]	idem

Mas. Mag., 1879
NOTE.—N.P. Signifies *not published.*

II.—PRINTED VERSIONS.

(Originals not known.)

No	NAME.	DATE.	FIRST PUBLISHED.	RE-PRINTED.
46	Roberts	1722	Pamphlet	Spencer's Old Constitutions, 1871
47	Briscoe	1724	idem	Mas. Mag., Oct., 1873, and Freem. Chron., 1876
48	Cole	1728-9	idem	Hughan's Constitutions of the Freemasons
49	Dodd	1739	idem	Carson's Rituals of Free- masonry, No. III., 1876
50	Krause (<i>apocryphal</i>)	1808	Drei altesten Urk., 1810 (<i>see note</i>)	Englised in O.C.
51	Dowland	1815	Gent. Magazine	O.C.

NOTE.—A Latin M.S. sent to Schneider, of Altenburg, by a certain Van Dyke, then travelling in England, and certified to be a "true translation of an Anglo-Saxon document existing at York."

* Sadler, *loc. cit.*

III.—MISSING VERSIONS, USED OR REFERRED TO.

No	NAME.	Used or Cited	FORMER CUSTODY.	REMARKS.
52	Melrose, No. 1	1674	Lodge of Melrose	Original of Nos. 17 and 41 Nat. Hist. of Staffordshire, 316-18
53	Plot	1686	Masons of Staffordshire	
54	Anderson	1723-38	Dr. Anderson	Forms used in the Constitu- tions, 1723 and 1738
55	Baker	1730-40	A London Carpenter	A roll seen by Dr. Rawlinson Builder's Complot Assistant Named in G. L. Records (<i>Schismatics</i>) ibid
56	Langloy	1738	Batty Langloy, London	
57	Morgan	1752	John Morgan, G. Sec.	
58	Dermott	idem	L. Dermott, G. Sec.	Manifesto of the L. of Antiquity Inventory of the G.L. (York) Hist. of York (Hargrove) Edinburgh Review, Ap., 1839
59	Wilson	1778	Mr. Wilson, of Bromhead	
60	York, No. 3	1779	Grand Lodge, York	
61	Hargrove	1818	idem	
62	Masons' Company	1839	Mason's Company	

The division of the Manuscript Constitutions into groups or families was long looked upon as chimerical, by the limited number of students who had alone attempted to penetrate beneath the somewhat unforbidding husk of their actual meaning and intent. But a learned German—Dr. Begemann, of Rostock—whom nature has bountifully endowed with ability, and untiring industry with a vast armoury of research, shews us very clearly—like Bro. John Lane in another branch of our antiquities—that specialists in Masonic study, as in other pursuits of knowledge unconnected with the Fraternity, by a concentration of thought on a single topic, may achieve results that are quite impossible, where either the field of inquiry is too large, or the versatility of the inquirer is not kept under subjection.

The groups or families into which the various "forms" of the Old Charges have been arranged or classified by Dr. Begemann—so far as his collation of the series has yet proceeded—will next be presented; but a word or two, and more I am unable to find room for, are due, both to the doctor and the reader, and in endeavouring within a brief compass to sum up my indebtedness to the one, I shall at the same time hope to bespeak an intelligent appreciation of very arduous and critical labours from the other.

The *readings* or *texts*, as distinguished from the *forms* or *writings* in which the Old Charges have become our heritage, exhibit many discrepancies, whereby some confusion and much disputation have arisen. Thus, the several entries in the series, respecting Hiram Abiff, and a General Assembly of particular note having been held in 1663, were each in their way productive of great dissension among our *litterati*. Both traditions or legends were—so to speak—only supported by a small minority vote; "but," it was urged, "however strongly the balance of evidence may appear to incline in one direction, *four* at all events of the Old Charges in the one instance (*Hiram*), and *two* in the other (*Assembly of 1663*), preclude the possibility of either of these incidents in our written traditions being excluded from consideration as important factors in the complicated problem of early Masonic history." By shewing, however, that in each case the variant reading has come down to us in a single line of transmission, the plurality of "forms" through which it meets the reader's eye becomes of comparatively little importance. Thus, in their *primâ facie* character, documents present themselves as so many independent and rival texts of greater or less purity. But, as a matter of fact, they are not independent; by the nature of the case they are all fragments—usually casual and scattered fragments—of a genealogical tree of transmission, sometimes of vast extent and intricacy. The more exactly we are able to trace the chief ramifications of the tree and to determine the places of the several records among the branches, the more secure will be the foundations laid for a criticism capable of distinguishing the original text from its successive corruptions.

The introduction of the factor of genealogy at once lessens the power of mere numbers. If there is sufficient evidence, external or internal, for believing that of ten MSS. the first nine were all copied, directly or indirectly, from the tenth, it will be known that all the variations from the tenth can be only corruptions, and that for documentary evidence we have only to follow the tenth.

If, however, the result of the inquiry is to find that all the nine MSS. were derived, not from the tenth, but from another lost MS., the ten documents resolve themselves virtually into two witnesses; the tenth MS., which can be known directly and completely, and the lost MS., which must be restored through the readings of its nine descendants, exactly and by simple transcription where they agree, approximately and by critical processes where they disagree.

The evidence on which the genealogy of documents turns is sometimes, though rarely, external, and is chiefly gained by a study of their texts in comparison with one another. The process depends on the principle that *identity of reading implies identity of origin*.*

The division by Dr. Begemann of the various forms of the Old Charges into groups or families leaves very little to be desired, though I must carefully guard myself against being supposed to lay down that the other methods of classification of older date are altogether superseded by the new arrangement. The various systems at any time in use have each of them their merit in special instances, and with a passing allusion to my own—a tabulation of the different forms in strict accordance with their *historical value*†—I shall bring my remarks under this head to a close.

From a strictly legal aspect the manuscript constitutions (or any references to them) are divisible into six classes.

I.—Lodge Records, *i.e.*, copies or versions of the "Old Charges" in actual Lodge custody, with regard to which there is no evidence of a possible derivation through any other channel than a purely Masonic one. II.—Now, or formerly, in the custody of Lodges or individuals, under circumstances which in each case raises a presumption of their having been actually used at the admission or reception of new members. III.—Rolls or scrolls and copies in book form. IV.—On vellum or parchment. V.—On ordinary paper; and VI.—Readings *not* enumerated in the preceding categories—*viz.*, late transcripts, printed copies, extracts, or references in printed books.

The words *Lodge Record* describe documents *coming from the proper custody*, and where there has apparently been *no interruption of possession*. Some MSS. may have been, and doubtless were, veritable "Lodge Records" in the same sense, but having passed out of the *proper custody*, now fail in the highest element of proof. The muniments in Class II. stand indeed only one step below what I term "Lodge Records," as historical documents, and very slightly above the rolls or scrolls and copies in book form; still, between each of the three divisions there is a marked deterioration of proof, which steadily increases until at the lower end of the scale the inference that some of the manuscripts were solely used for antiquarian purposes merges into absolute certainty.

In the present section I have referred to peculiarities or discrepancies to be found in two families or groups of the Old Charges, and the special feature of the "Roberts" class of these documents (already alluded to) will now serve my immediate purpose, which is to show that although the evidence on which the genealogy of documents turns, is *chiefly* gained by a study of their texts in comparison with one another, it is *sometimes*, though rarely, external.

In Harleian MS., 1942, are given what are termed "The New Articles," but without date. In the "Roberts'" version, however, these are entitled "Additional Orders and Constitutions made and agreed upon at a General Assembly held at . . . on the Eighth Day of December, 1663." The Articles in question are not given in the Rawlinson MS., the third member of the group.

It has been contended by Hughan‡ and myself that the compiler of the "Roberts'" *print* simply took the bulk of his so-called "Constitutions" from the Harleian *manuscript*. Herein we are wrong, according to Dr. Begemann, but I pass over this point, where we are slightly at variance with the doctor, to reach another, on which I think it will be possible for German and English students to join hands.

The entry in the Roberts' *print* is certainly a remarkable one, but the date of publication—1722—is very late. The next evidence is gained from Harleian MS., 1942—which if we accept the testimony of greatest weight and authority, that of Mr. E. A. Bond—will take us back to the beginning of the seventeenth century, and wherein we find—*mirabile dictu*—six out of seven regulations that (if the Roberts' text is authentic) were only made in 1663!

But the point I wish to establish is the following one. The value of the evidence, in this particular case, altogether depends upon the channels through which it has descended. These are the manuscript and the print, one of which has its place in Class V., and the other in Class VI., above. Therefore, leaving undecided all minor questions relating to either document, I think their very inclusion among the "records of the Craft" is of itself sufficient to demonstrate the necessity of a legal system of classification being used concurrently with the philological and other methods that may be called into requisition.

* *O.C.*, 11, 18. † *Hist.*, i., 75, ii., 208.

‡ *of Hist.*, chap. xv., *passim*. § *Ibid* ii., 192, *et seqq.*

DR. BEGEMANN'S CLASSIFICATION OF THE "OLD CHARGES."
I.—THE GRAND LODGE FAMILY.

^a Grand Lodge Branch.	^b Dowlan Branch.	^c York Branch.	^d Lansdowne Branch.	^e Colne Branch.	^f Buchanan Branch.	^g Sundry Forms.
Grand Lodge (2) Phillipps, No. 1 (4) Phillipps, No. 2 (5) Kilwinning (14) Cama (39)	Dowlan (51) York, No. 6 (20) Clerke (23) Phillipps, No. 3 (40) Papworth (31)	York, No. 1 (3) York, No. 2 (28) York, No. 5 (19)	Lansdowne (1) Antiquity (22) Probity (38)	Colno, No. 1 (21) Colno, No. 2 (26) Stanley (30)	Buchanan (13) Atcheson Haven (15)	Melrose, No. 2 (17) Melrose, No. 3 (41) Wood (7) Aberdeen (16) Dauntsey (24) Harris (37)

II.—THE SLOANE FAMILY.

^a Sloane Branch.	^b Hope Branch.	^c Alnwick Branch.	^d Sundry Forms.
Sloane, No. 3848 (10) Sloane, No. 3323 (11) Harleian, No. 2054 (9) Tunnah (44) Briscoe (47)	Hope York, No. 4 (18) (25)	Alnwick Wren Crane (27) (45) (42)	Lechnere (12) Scarborough (29)

III.—THE ROBERTS FAMILY.
(An offshoot of the Sloane Family)

Roberts (46)
Harleian, No. 1942 (8)
Rawlinson (36)

IV.—THE SPENCER FAMILY.
(An offshoot of the Grand Lodge Branch):

Spencer (32)
Dodd (49)
Cole (48)
Inigo Jones (6)

NOTE.—The numbers within brackets refer to those on the previous CALENDAR

When, in a court of law, *ancient documents* are tendered in support of *ancient possession*, care is especially taken to ascertain the *genuineness* of the ancient documents produced ; and this may in general be shown, *prima facie*, by proof that they come from the *proper custody*. It is not, however, necessary that they should be found in the best and most proper place of deposit, but it must appear that the instrument comes from such custody, as though not strictly proper in point of law, is sufficient to afford a reasonable presumption in favour of its genuineness ; and that it is otherwise free from just ground of suspicion. Where old deeds have been produced as evidence in cases of title, from *collections of manuscripts made for antiquarian purposes*, they have been rejected. They must be produced from the custody of persons interested in the estate. Thus an ancient writing, enumerating the possessions of a monastery, produced from the Heralds' office ; a curious manuscript book, entitled the "Secretum Abbatis," preserved in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, containing a grant to an abbey ; and an old grant to a priory, brought from the Cottonian MSS. in the British Museum—have in each case been held to be inadmissible.

In a court of law the Roberts' print would be wholly inadmissible, and even the Harleian MS. would only be received under the principle laid down with so much force by the late Mr. Pitt Taylor that—"although it is perfectly true that the mere production of an ancient document, unless supported by some corroborative evidence of acting under it, or of modern possession, would be entitled to little, if any, weight ; still there appears to be no strict rule of law which would authorise the judge in withdrawing the deed altogether from the consideration of the jury—in other words, the absence of proof of possession affects merely the *weight*, and not the *admissibility*, of the instrument."*

It is true, no doubt, that the historian has no rules as to exclusion of evidence or incompetency of witnesses. In his court every document may be read, every statement may be heard. But in proportion as he admits all evidence indiscriminately, he must exercise discrimination in judging of its effect. Especially is this necessary in a critical survey of the Old Charges. The evidence of some of these documents is quite irreconcilable with that of others. The truth which lies between them cannot be seized by conjecture, and is only to be got at by a review of facts, and not by an attempt to reconcile conflicting statements.†

III.—THE STATUTES OF LABOURERS.—The great plague of 1348, and the consequent depopulation, gave origin to the first Statute of Labourers, whereby it was sought to regulate the rate of wages and the price of provisions. This was followed by a long series of similar enactments, but to which, as they will be found collected in the seventh chapter of my *History of Freemasonry*,‡ I need do no more than refer.

IV.—REGULATIONS FOR THE TRADE OF MASONS (LONDON), A.D. 1356.§—These should be read in their entirety. The ninth article reads :—"Also, if any of the said trade will not be ruled or directed in due manner by the persons of his trade sworn thereunto, such sworn persons are to make known his name unto the mayor ; and the mayor, by assent of the aldermen and sheriffs, shall cause him to be chastised by imprisonment and other punishment. That so other rebels may take example by him, to be ruled by the good folks of their trade."

V.—THE STATUTE OF APPRENTICES.||—This codified the order existing for centuries among the craft guilds, and applied it to all the trades of its time. It is, in fact, a selection from all the preceding enactments on the subject of labour ; those provisions deemed useful being retained, others modified, and the rest repealed.

VI.—SCOTTISH CHARTERS AND REGULATIONS.—Grant by King James VI. to Patrick Coipland, of Udaucht, of the office of Wardanrie over the Craft of Masons within the Shires of Aberdeen, Banff, and Kincardine, 1590¶ ;—Schaw Statutes, No. I., 1598** ;—Schaw

* *Law of Evidence*, 547.

† *Hist. ii.*, 195.

‡ 1. 328-80.—*The Statutes Relating to the Freemasons*.

§ *Ibid.* Originally published by H. T. Riley in his "*Memorials of London in the 13th, 14th, and 15th Centuries*," 280-82.

|| 5 Eliz. c. iv., A.D. 1562. See *Hist. ii.*, 376, and *English Gilds* (Brentano, *Introductory Essay*) clxvii.

¶ *Privy Seal Book of Scotland*. Printed in the *European Magazine*, lvii., 433, A.D. 1810 ; and by Laurie, *History of Freemasonry*, 421, in 1859.

** Laurie, 441 ; Lyon, *History of the Lodge of Edinburgh*, 9 ; and *Constitutions Grand Lodge of Scotland* 1848.

Statutes, No. 2, 1599 *;—St. Clair Charters, Nos. 1 and 2, 1601, 1628 †;—“Actis and Statutis” for the government of the several “Airtis and Craftis” in the Kingdom of Scotland, 1636 ‡;—Charter of the Scoon and Perth Lodge, 1658 §;—and Lawes and Statutes of the Lodge of Aberdeen, 1670.¶

VII.—GERMAN ORDINANCES—also known as CONSTITUTIONS, STATUTES, and REGULATIONS.—Cologne Records, ¶ 1396-1800;—Strasburg Ordinances, ** 1459;—Torgau Ordinances, †† 1462;—and the Strasburg Brother-book, †† 1563.

The manuscripts comprised in this series relate exclusively to the *Steinmetzen* (Stonemasons) of Germany. The documents of 1459 and 1462 begin with an invocation to the Trinity, the Virgin Mary, and the Quatuor Coronati or Four Crowned Martyrs—the legendary Patron Saints of the building-trades. No such prayer appears either in (what has been published of) the Cologne Records, or in the Brother-book or Ordinances of Strasburg, 1563, though it is worthy of being recorded, that in the former, the guild of stone-masons and carpenters—who are always referred to in connection with one another—is repeatedly called the Fraternity of St. John the Baptist.

VIII.—FRENCH STATUTES.—Code of the Masons, Stone-masons, Plasterers and Mortarers of Paris, §§ 1260; Regulations made by the King and Parliament from 1350; and Statutes of the Masons and Architects of Montpellier, 1586. These are minutely reviewed in my *History of Freemasonry*.||| The oldest of the series fixes the minimum servitude of an apprentice at six years: workmen and apprentices are to swear by the saints that they will conform to the usages and customs of the craft; powers of petty justice are conferred on the Master; and it is laid down that—“The mortarers are free of watch duty, and all stone-masons since the time of Charles Martel, as the wardens (*preudomes*) have heard tell from father to son” (§ xxii.). The Royal edicts and Parliamentary enactments are not capable of being compressed within a smaller space than where attention has been directed to them in the last note.¶¶ The Montpellier Statutes decree a servitude of six years, half as apprentice and half as fellow (*compagnon*), as a condition precedent to attaining the mastership. One Master is not to entice away, or find work for, the servant or fellow of another Master. Differences are to be adjusted without going outside the Craft. Honesty and decency are strictly enjoined. Also, that none may plead ignorance of the Statutes, they are to be read once a year on the day of their assembly.

Lastly, and before passing away from the domain of Operative Masonry, I shall invite attention to some papers of great merit and originality, *On the Superintendents of English Buildings in the Middle Ages*, from which I have myself derived much instruction, written by Mr. Wyatt Papworth, in 1860 and 1861.***

* Lyon, 12.

† Printed by Laurie, 1804, and Laurie, 1859, in the appendices to their respective works; but facsimiles of the originals, together with printed copies of the same, will be found in Lyon's *History of the Lodge of Edinburgh*, 58-62.

‡ From the Minute Book of Lodge Atcheson Haven. Printed by Laurie, 1859 (*app. iv.*), where also will be found the minutes accepting and approving the above “Actis,” signed—1637 and 1638—by the brothers, Sir Anthonie and Henry Alexander, successively Grand Warden and Master of Works to the King, after conferences with representatives of the Lodge (*app. v.*).

§ Printed by Hughan in the *Masonic Magazine*, Oct., 1878.

¶ *Freemason*, 1871; and Lyon, 423-27.

¶¶ Municipal Archives. Many extracts are given by me, *Hist. i.*, 169-71, which are derived from *Latomia* (Leipsic), 1862.

** Printed in German by Heldman, Krause, and Heideloff, in *Drei Aeltesten Gesch. Denkmale*, 1819; *Drei Aelt. Kunsturkunden*, 1821; and *Bauhütten des Mittelalters*, 1844, respectively. An English translation will be found in the *Masonic Eclectic* (New York), Sept., 1860; Steinbrenner, *Origin and Early Hist. of F.*, 1864; and *Kenning's Cyclo.*, 1878.

†† This code was discovered by Stieglitz in the Stone-masons' Lodge at Rochlitz, Saxony, and published by him in “*Über die Kirche der Heiligen Kunigunde zu Rochlitz*,” 1829. Fort also gives it (in the original German) as an appendix to his well-known work. Translations of these and the subsequent Ordinances of 1563, will be found in *Hist.*, Chap. iii.—“The Stonemasons of Germany”—where all the Statutes cited above are reviewed and compared.

‡‡ Printed by Heldman, 1819, and Krause, 1821, in the works already described.

§§ *Doc. Inéd. sur l'Hist. de France.—Le Livre des Métiers (Boileau)*. A translation, with notes, was given in Moore's *Freemasons' Monthly Mag.*—Boston, U.S.A.—May, 1863.

||| Chap. iv.—The Craft Guilds (*Corps D'Etat*) of France.

¶¶ It is not a little remarkable, that an ordinance issued by John II. in 1350 (after the Great Plague), bears a close resemblance in date, purport, and actuating cause, to the English Statutes of Labourers—23 and 25 Edw. III.—enacted in 1349 and 1350, 51. cf. *Hist.*, i. 208,

*** Transactions, R.I.B.A., III., N.S.

The Masonic Poem formed the subject of an essay "On the Introduction of Freemasonry in England," read by Mr. J. O. Halliwell, F.R.S., before the Society of Antiquaries—April 18, 1839*—and editions of it, in a complete form, were published in 1840 and 1844, by the same well-known scholar and antiquary, who, writing in this latter year, states: "The poem is taken from a very small quarto manuscript on vellum, written not later than the latter part of the fourteenth century, preserved in the Old Royal Library at the British Museum. Casley, by some strange oversight in the only catalogue we at present possess, has entitled it 'a poem of moral duties.'" The writer then adds in a note—"The MS. formerly belonged to Charles Theyer, a well-known collector of the seventeenth century, and is No. 146 in his collection, as described in Bernard's *Catalogus Manuscriptorum Angliæ*, p. 200, col. 2. It was probably from this catalogue that Casley took his erroneous description, his own work being, for the most part, very carefully executed."

But the words,

P O E M
O N T H E
C R A F T O F
M A S O N R Y

together with Theyer's name, are lettered on the back of the cover, while we know as a fact that the book was bound in 1757, and the authorities at the Museum are confident that the inscription is not of any later date. So that unless this belief is ill-founded, the "discovery," as it has been termed, of the oldest document relating to Freemasonry, must be shared between Theyer and Halliwell, as the former was, at least, a finger post pointing out the way, even if we concede to the latter the distinction of having served as the actual guide.

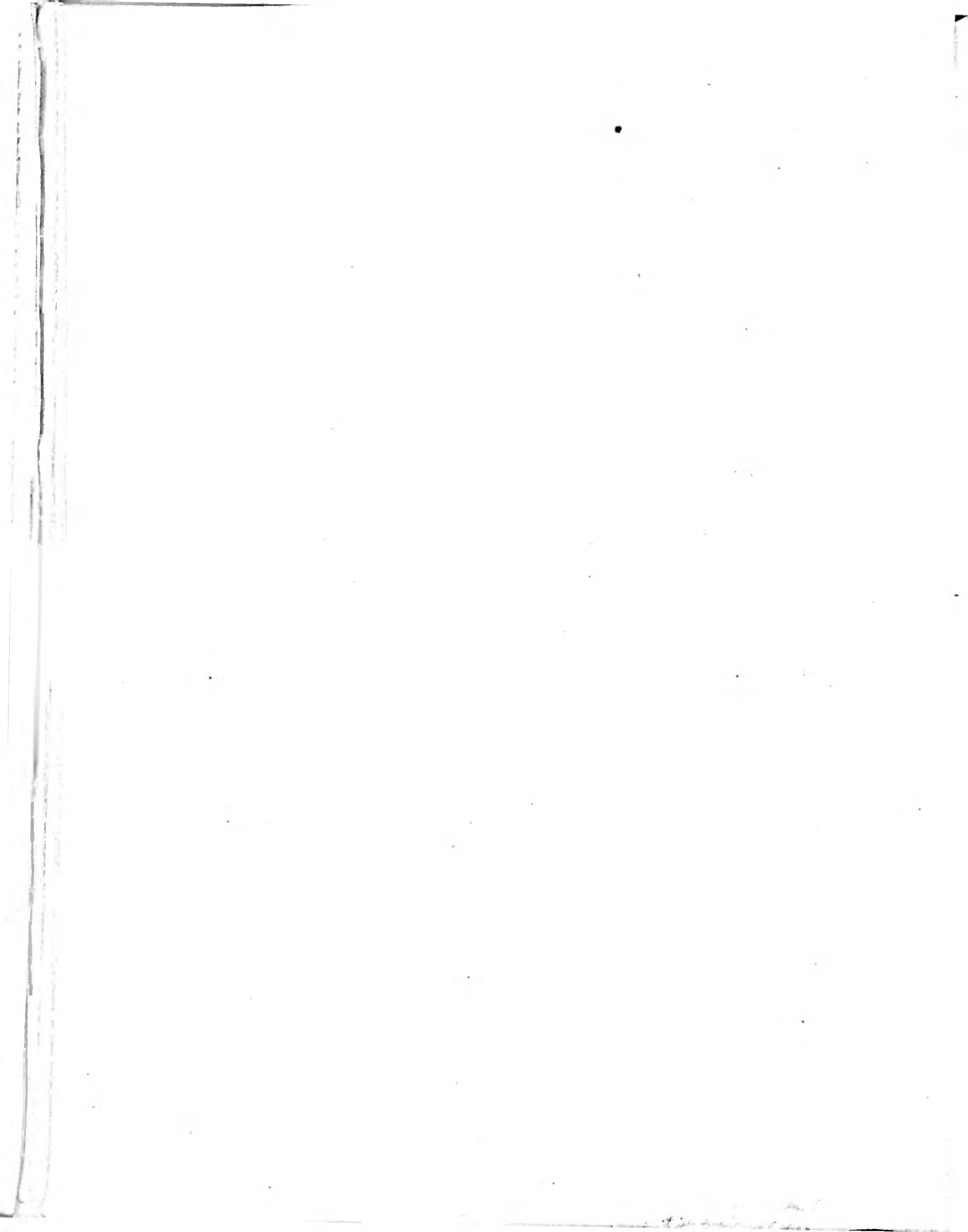
The poem has been reprinted in America, and a very good German translation of it was published by Dr. C. W. Asher, at Hamburg, in 1842.

The lithographed *fac-simile* of the poem—as of *Urbanitatis* and *Instructions for a Parish Priest*, which are given in Part I. of this volume—has been most carefully executed by Mr. F. Compton Price, and can be relied upon as an exact copy of the original. As regards the *Regius MS.*, the reproduction is page for page; but the two other *fac-similes* have assumed a shape slightly differing from the originals, owing to the exigencies of space, *i.e.*, the columns are not broken at the same place, and the text does not, therefore, as in the poem, accurately represent the actual size of the manuscript.

It is both a duty and a pleasure before concluding these prefatory remarks to refer in grateful terms to the good feeling and generosity evinced by Bro. H. J. Whympier towards this Lodge, of which, to the great satisfaction of us all, he has since become a member. Our intention to undertake the present reprint had not long been announced, when Bro. Whympier, P.D. Dis. G.M. Punjab, who was, unknown to us, engaged in bringing out a *fac-simile* of the poem, in the original size and binding, became aware of our project. He at once communicated with our Secretary, expressing regret at having incurred the appearance of wishing to forestall the Lodge, and stating that his transfers (the most costly and difficult part of the undertaking) were almost completed. These transfers he not only placed at our disposal, thereby lessening our toil, but he also refused to allow us in any way to share the expense to which he had been put in their preparation. Bro. Whympier was undoubtedly the first in the field, and had he shown any annoyance at the *contretemps*, we could scarcely have blamed him. The truly fraternal manner, therefore, in which he allowed us to reap the benefit of his own very arduous labours, fully merits the hearty acknowledgments of the Quatuor Coronati Lodge—hereby expressed by me on its behalf.

In the succeeding pages I have found it convenient to intersperse with the actual commentary some short studies, or dissertations, upon certain marked features of the *Regius MS.* These, being all more or less digressions, are therefore so entitled, though it is hoped, that in each case, what may appear at a first glance to be extraneous matter, will be found, on a closer view, to be not only germane to the inquiry, but also to be, to some considerable extent, elucidatory of the text. But whether the general structure of the poem, the York Legend, and the traditionary history of the Masons' Craft, are subjects demanding the special treatment they have received, is a question which I shall leave, though not without some confidence as to the result, for the readers of *ARS QUATUOR CORONATORUM* to determine.

* *Archæologia*, xxviii., 444.



A COMMENTARY ON THE REGIUS MS.

“ Take pains the genuine meaning to explore ;
There sweat, there strain ; tug the laborious oar
Search every comment that your care can find ;
Some here, some there, may hit the poet's mind.
Where things appear unnatural and hard,
Consult your author with himself compar'd.”—*Roscommon*.

THE MS., Bibl. Reg. 17 A.—or Regius MS.—conveys the idea, at a first view, of being separated into two great divisions, one terminating at line 496, and the other going on to the end of the poem. But when you look more closely into the matter, the absence of either continuity or connection makes itself felt, and it is at once apparent that the compiler has both collected and transcribed from many sources, but without taking the trouble to attach any real thread of union to the collections or transcripts, of which his verses are made up.

The first of the collections—by which I mean the portions of his *codex* where it is alone possible that the writer has clothed the information he imparts to us in his own rhythmic composition—extends to line 470, and comprises a fragment of legendary history, including allusions to Euclid and Athelstan, and enumerations of the fifteen Articles and Points respectively.

At line 471 we meet with—*ALIA ORDINACIO ARTIS GEMETRIA*. This, by the abrupt manner in which it begins and ends, has been clearly interpolated here from some other legend, as it cannot possibly be pieced on either to what precedes or to what comes after it. In lines 471-96, we have therefore a second fragmentary legend, mutilated and imperfect.

After this (*line 487*) comes *ARS QUATUOR CORONATORUM*, and whether this third legend (or tradition) is connected with its immediate precursor, and whether if so, these two have become disjoined from the first legend of all, and properly form part of it, or are really distinct though imperfect forms—confusedly arranged—are points upon which opinions will differ.

ALIA ORDINACIO has four lines (487-90) which, said our late Bro. Woodford,* are very noteworthy and seemingly a quotation from a speech of the King (Athelstan), or a portion of the actual charter. According to the same authority, “ If the slip of parchment once in the possession of Bro. Woolley, of York, and seen as late as 1829 or 1830, by Mr. Wallbran, ever turns up, it will probably be a Guild Charter by Athelstan—a giver of Charters.”

ARS QUATUOR CORONATORUM, which may be regarded as the third milestone on the track we are now pursuing, brings us down to line 534, after which comes—lines 535-76—a still older legend of the Guild, beginning with Noah and the Flood, continuing with the tower of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar and Euclid, and ending with a recital of the seven arts and sciences.

The fifth division of the poem, which is mainly a set of directions as to behaviour in church, and is in great part extracted from “ Mirks' Instructions for Parish Priests,” begins at line 577 and ends at line 692.

The sixth and last part of the MS.—lines 693-794—is almost word for word with “ *Urbanitatis*,” a poem dealing with conduct at meals and before superiors, and which enjoins strict habits of propriety and cleanliness.

Having given an outline of the Masonic poem, my next task will be to fill it in, to the extent that I am capable of doing, and this will be best attempted by dealing with the component parts *seriatim*, which I shall proceed to do.

The legendary history, however, though lying somewhat scattered throughout the metrical compilation, I shall treat as a whole. The opening narrative bears a close resemblance to the second legend on the Cooke MS.—where there is also a variation of the traditionary history. The “old boke” (*l 2*) I assume to have been some early form of the manuscript constitutions, a conclusion strengthened by the circumstance that in the “ *History* ” of immediate juniority,† we meet with the expression “ boke of charys,” which as it can leave no doubt in the mind with regard to its meaning in one *codex*, will materially aid our judgment in determining the actual import of almost identical words in the other.

* At the last Masonic conference I ever had with my lamented friend, the present Commentary was the occasion of our then meeting, and the entire subject of our discourse.

† Cooke MS., first legend, *l.* 534.

The plurality of legendary narratives that is met with in both exemplars of the group of documents, to which I have assigned the highest place as MSS. of the Craft, demands our attention and for the following reason.

The fact that the manuscript constitutions are not elsewhere referred to in any literature that has come down to us of the 14th and 15th centuries than in the Regius and Cooke MSS. is no proof that but few copies were in existence at those periods.

Not to speak of the slow and silent, but incessant operation of time, assisted by damp and other auxiliaries, through which manuscripts were constantly being destroyed, there was an immense consumption of them after the invention of printing; vast numbers of beautiful and ancient manuscripts were used for backs and bands, fly-leaves, and even covers by the bookbinders.

The frequency of this practice is incontestable, though the evidence in support of it is gradually disappearing, owing to the books so bound having been principally those published during the first century of printing, and therefore the volumes themselves have now become comparatively scarce.*

"Whole libraries were destroyed, or made waste paper of, or consumed for the vilest uses. The splendid and magnificent Abbey of Malmesbury, which possessed some of the finest manuscripts in the Kingdom, was ransacked, and its treasures either sold or burnt to serve the commonest purposes of life. An antiquary who travelled through that town, many years after the dissolution, relates that he saw broken windows patched up with remnants of the most valuable MSS. on vellum, and that the bakers had not even then consumed the stores they had accumulated, in heating the ovens."†

In France, the devastation was even on a larger scale, and so deficient are the memorials there, that (to use the words of a famous writer) "the only knowledge we possess concerning the destruction of the six episcopal sees of Gascony arises from an incidental allusion in a charter."‡

FIRST DIGRESSION.

[ON THE STRUCTURE OF THE POEM, AND A PART OF THE LEGENDARY HISTORY.]

Warton tells us, in his history of English Poetry§—"There can be no doubt that the works we possess do not fairly represent the actual literature. We know that for many centuries after the Conquest, books written in the old language were considered as waste parchment, and utilized accordingly; and that great havoc was made among the monastic libraries at the Reformation. The consequence is, that many of the finest poems are mere fragments, and those that are preserved have escaped destruction by a series of lucky chances, and, with a few trifling exceptions, are preserved only in single manuscripts." Of the early Anglo-Saxon poems that survive, we learn from the same writer that several were certainly composed before the German colonization of Britain, while the greater number of the rest (with equal certainty) were composed in Northumbria. From this he concludes, "That, as literature was first cultivated in the North, there is an *à priori* probability in the case of all the older poems that they were either composed by Northumbrians, or at least first written down in Northumbria."|| Here, of course, the allusion is to MSS. in rhythmical form, but the characteristics of all the Anglo-Saxon poetry, including the unwritten (or larger) portion of it, were identical, and must, therefore, have borne the same Northern impress.

Whether our Masonic traditions had their origin in those early times, and passed from mouth to mouth by song and recitation, until the 13th (or 14th) century, though matter for interesting speculation can be carried no further, but their strophic texture when we first meet with them is at least worthy of our attention.

It is also a curious circumstance, and deserves to be recorded, that most of the minstrels are represented to have been of the North of England. There is scarce an old historical song or ballad wherein a minstrel or harper appears, but he is characterised by way of eminence to have been "of the North Countrye," and, indeed, the prevalence of the northern dialect in such compositions shows that this representation is real.¶

The chronology and authorship of the Regius MS. I shall be fain to leave very much in the dark, though I trust not quite in the total gloom in which I find them. A sufficiency of evidence will presently be adduced to justify a strong presumption that the Masonic

* Maitland, *The Dark Ages*, 281.

† *Ibid.*

‡ Palgrave, *History of Normandy and England*, i., 425.

§ Edit. by W. C. Hazlitt, 1871, ii., 7.

|| *Ibid.*

¶ Essay on the Ancient Minstrels in England.—Percy, *Reliquis of Anc. Eng. Poetry*, i., xli.

poem, like the others of early date, was of Northumbrian origin, but my remarks under this head will be deferred until we reach that part of the narrative where King Athelstan is made to figure as a patron and protector of the Masonic body.

But as in some degree anticipatory of that inquiry, in which I shall attempt to show that some leading incidents of the Craft Legend could have had no other source of origin than Saxon Northumbria, I shall proceed to examine a special feature of the Regius MS.—its poetic form—by which it is distinguished from all the other ancient writings wherein a History of Masonry is related.

According to an authority of great weight and reputation:—It was long before mankind knew the art of writing, but they very early invented several methods to supply, in a good measure, that want. The method most commonly used was, to compose their histories in verse and sing them. Legislators made use of this expedient to consign and hand down to posterity their regulations. The first laws of all nations were composed in verse and sung. We have certain proof that the first laws of Greece were a kind of songs. The laws of the ancient inhabitants of Spain were verses, which they sang. Tuiston was regarded by the Germans as their first lawgiver. They said, he put his laws into verses and songs. This ancient custom was long kept up by several nations.*

The usages of the ancient Germans are also referred to, but with greater minuteness, by Sir Francis Palgrave, who observes:—It cannot be ascertained that any of the Teutonic nations reduced their customs into writing, until the influence of increasing civilization rendered it expedient to depart from their primeval usages; but an aid to the recollection was often afforded, as amongst the Britons, by poetry, or by the condensation of the maxim or principle in proverbial or antithetical sentences, like the Cymbric triads. The marked alliteration of the Anglo-Saxon laws is to be referred to this cause, and in the Frisic laws several passages are evidently written in verse. From hence also may originate those quaint and pithy rhymes in which the doctrines of the law of the old time are not unfrequently recorded. Thus, the Kentishman asserted the liberty of his gavel-kind tenure, by the rude distich of "*The vader to the boughe—and the son to the ploughe.*" He redeemed his lands from the Lord by repeating, as it was said in the language of his ancestors, "*Nighon si the yeld—and nighon si the geld—and vif pund for the were—ere he become he. ldere.*" The forest verse, "*Dog draw—stable stand—back berend—and bloody hand,*" justified the verderer in his summary execution of the offender. And in King Athelstan's grant to the good men of Beverley, and inscribed beneath his effigy in the minster, "*Als jre—mak I the—as heart may think—or eigh may see,*" we have, perhaps, the ancient form of enfranchisement or manumission.†

It is evident, however, that the language of this charter has either been modernized and corrupted by successive transcriptions, or the instrument itself is a forgery of much later date, as will duly appear in the sequel. The technical forms and proceedings of the Scandinavians, like the maxims of the law, appear to have been originally framed in verse or metre. Under the Anglo-Saxons, when the defendant was brought before the Folk-mote, the legal forms were declared or announced in poetry or rhythm. The oaths also, were couched in a kind of easy alliterative rhythm—prose flowing into irregular verse; enough to aid the memory and to guide the ear, though not circumscribed by any regular metre.

A rhythmical oath was similarly taken by candidates on becoming members of the Holy Vehme, and in the Free Field Court of Corbey, the form of opening the Court was by a metrical dialogue between the Frohner and the Graff.‡

In the words of the same authority, "Notwithstanding the labours of Augustine, it is to be suspected that the ancient wedding form is yet retained in our ritual, when the wife is taken 'to have and to hold—for better for worse—in sickness and health—to love and to cherish—till death do us part.'"§ A supposition, indeed, having much to recommend it, the more especially as in the older marriage forms, the rhythm is more strongly marked than in that which is now in use.

It is probable that the earliest poetry of the Anglo-Saxons consisted of single strophes, each narrating, or rather alluding to, some exploit of a hero or god, or expressing some

* Goguet, *Origine des Lois, des Arts, et des Sciences*, 1758, i., 26, 27. "Apollo, according to a very ancient tradition, was one of the first legislators. The same tradition says, that he published his laws to the sound of his lyre, thereby implying that he had set them to music."—*Ibid.*

† *Rise and Progress of the English Commonwealth*, i., 42, 43.

‡ *Ibid.*, ii., cxxxiii., et seqq.

§ *Ibid.*, ccoxv.

single sentiment, generally of a proverbial or gnomic character. Such is the poetry of savage nations. The next stage is to combine these strophes into connected groups. The third to abandon the strophic arrangement altogether.*

In the Masonic poem we are hardly carried beyond the second stage, and it is the one in which a comparison with the Anglo-Saxon verse will be most easily and profitably conducted.

This will take us back to the heroic song in which the *scôp*† or poet related the venerable traditions of the fore-world to the chieftains assembled on the "mead-bench," and to a state of society when all literary genius centres in one person, the minstrel, who equally composed and sang.‡

A skill in poetry seems in some measure to have been a national science among the Scandinavians, but the exercise of the talent was properly confined to a stated profession. With their poetry the Goths imported into Europe a species of poets or singers, whom they called Scalds—a word that denotes smoothers and polishers of language.§

These Scandinavian bards were esteemed and entertained in other countries besides their own, and may by that means have communicated their fictions to various parts of Europe.

The Northern scalds are said to have constantly frequented the courts of the British, Scottish, and Irish chieftains, but that their tales flourished among the Saxons, who became possessors of England in the sixth century, may be justly presumed.||

As literature gained ground among the Anglo-Saxons, poetry no longer remained a separate science. The profession of bard gradually declined, and in the place of the old scalds (or scôps) a new rank of poets arose called gleemen,¶ or harpers, from which came the order of English minstrels, who flourished until the 16th century.

From their general diffusion it has been suggested that the scaldic inventions, even if they did not take deep root in continental Europe, must at least have prepared the way for the more easy admission of the Arabian fabling about the 9th century, by which they were, however, in great measure superseded.

It is probable that many of the scaldic imaginations may have become blended with the Arabian fictions, and there is also ground for belief that the Gothic scalds enriched their vein of fabling from this new and fertile source, opened by the Moors in Spain, and afterwards propagated by the Crusades.**

The minstrel poets of the Anglo-Saxons had, by degrees, composed a large mass of national poetry, which formed collectively one grand mythic cycle. Their education consisted chiefly in committing this poetry to memory, and it was thus preserved from age to age. They rehearsed such portions of it as might be asked for by the hearers, or as the circumstances of the moment might require, for it seems certain that they were in the habit of singing detached scenes even of particular poems, just as we are told was done with the works of Homer in the earlier times of Greece.

The practice of singing detached pieces accounts for the fragments of larger poems which are found in manuscripts. In their passage from one minstrel to another, these poems underwent successive changes; and since the poetry belonged to the whole class, without being severally known as the work of this or that individual, it happens that all the Anglo-Saxon national poetry is anonymous.††

During the long period which elapsed before this poetry was committed to writing, it was preserved almost entirely by the memory, and when this faculty is exercised and disciplined as it was by the minstrels and scholars of that day, its power of retaining and preserving is perfectly wonderful. Yet it is clear that, even in the twelfth century, when the Anglo-Saxon literature was rapidly falling into neglect, some songs composed by Aldheim four centuries before, were still preserved in the memory of the people.

* Sweet, *Hist. Anglo-Saxon Poetry*.—Warton, ii., 8, *ut supr.*

† SCÔPE.—(A.S. *scôp*.) Minstrel, singer, poet; the invariable attendant of the feasts.—Garnett, *Beowulf*, xl.; see, Thorpe, *Anglo-Saxon Poems of Beowulf*, *The Scôp or Gleeman's Tale*, and *The Fight at Finnesburg*.

‡ Wright, *Biog. Brit. Lit.* i., 1, 2.

§ Percy, *Rel. Anc. Eng. Poet.* i., xx.

|| Warton, i., 117, *et seqq.*; Hickes, *Thesaur.* i., 101.

¶ *Gleeman* answers to the Latin, *Joculator*. Fabyan, in his account of Bledgaret, an ancient British King famous for his skill in poetry and music, calls him "a cunnyngo musician, the whiche, for his excellence in that facultie, was called of the Brytons God of Gleemen."—Chron. Eng. and France, edit 1811, 29.

** Warton, i., 136, 137.

†† Wright, i., 6, 7.

The natural result of the mode of transmission was, that the original compositions were considerably disfigured in their passage from one reciter to another, and the more so, because the persons by whom they were chiefly preserved, were often themselves professed minstrels, and therefore more likely to adulterate them. Moreover, each minstrel sang in the dialect which he himself spoke. Sometimes, too, he forgot a few lines, or a long passage, and the poem became imperfect; sometimes he lost a line or a word, and was obliged to make one to supply its place, or to borrow one which his memory might supply from some other poem; and at other times he might change particular passages, more especially the introductions to poems, to suit the occasion, or to please his own fancy.

The manuscripts of Anglo-Saxon poetry abound in every kind of defect, and these faults are mostly of such a nature as to show that their contents must have been taken down from recitation.*

The popular literature of the Normans in France and England previous to the twelfth century is totally unknown to us. However, as nearly the whole of it must have been confined to the jongleurs, who were at the same time authors and minstrels, and as it was probably seldom or never committed to writing, we have no difficulty in accounting for its loss. We know that there were jongleurs in Normandy at an early period, and that they followed their patrons into England. But we only become acquainted with their compositions at a later period.†

The jongleurs were, in the middle ages, an order of men who, uniting the art of poetry with that of music, sang on different instruments, either verses of their own composition or that of others. Often the songs and gesticulations were accompanied by feats of legerdemain, with which they amused the spectators, and from this, no doubt, was derived their name of *jongleors*, *juggleours*, *juglers*, and *jongleurs*, from the Latin word *joculator*.

Before the conquest of England by the Normans, the Anglo-Saxons named the jongleurs, *gleemen*, that is, men of music, or musicians, but after the Conquest the Anglo-Normans gave them the name of jongleurs, which they altered in various ways. In the theatre, the jongleurs took the name of mimics (*mimes*) and buffoons (*histrions*), when, however, they introduced stories (*contes*) or recitals (*dicts ou dicties*) with their songs, people called them *conteors*, *conteours*, or *conteurs*, and *diseurs*.

Often, also, they were called *fablors*, *vableours*, and *fabliers*, because they recited tales in verse (*fabliaux*); *gesteours*, or *gesteurs*, because they chanted of Romance, to which they had themselves given the name of *chansons de gestes*; and *harpeours*, or *harpeurs*, because they accompanied their songs with the harp. Lastly, as they marched frequently in bands (or companies), they were then styled *menestrels* or *menestriers*, and by the Anglo-Normans, *minstrels*.‡

From another authority I extract the following:—As the minstrels' art consisted of several branches the professors were distinguished by different denominations, as *rimours*, *chanterres*, *conteors*, *juggleours* or *jongleurs*, *jestours*, *lccours*, and *troubadours*, or *trouvers*,§—in modern language, rhymers, singers, story-tellers, jugglers, relaters of heroic actions, buffoons, and poets—but all of them were included in the general name of minstrel. The *trouvers* may be said to have embellished their productions with rhyme, while the *conteours* related their histories in prose.

It is, however, very certain that the poet, the songster, and the musician were frequently united in the same person.

The *conteours* and the *jestours* who were also called *dissours*, and *seggers* or *sayers*, in English, were literally *tale-tellers*, who recited either from their own compositions or those of others, consisting of popular tales and romances, for the entertainment of public companies on occasions of joy and festivity.||

In the life of Alexander, an anonymous poem, *temp.* Edward II., there appears the following well-known old rhyme, which paints the manners of the time, and is, perhaps, the true reading: ¶

Switho mury hit is in hallo
When the *burdes wawen alle*.—l. 1163.

But in another place is to be found what has more to do with the subject in hand:

Mury hit is in halle to hero the harpe
The mynstrall syngith, theo jogolour carpith.—l. 5990.

* Wright 21—23. † *Ibid.*, ii., xiv. ‡ Do La Ruo (Abbé), *Essais Historiq. sur les Bardes, les Jongleurs, et les Trouvères, Normands et Anglo-Normands* (1834), i., 103.

§ In the Latin, MINISTERELLUS, or ministrallus, is also called *mimus*, *mimicus*, *histrion*, *joculator*, *versificator*, and *scurra*.

¶ Strutt, *Sports and Pastimes of the People of England*, 135—37.

¶ Warton, ii. 209, *ubi supr.*

From this it would appear that the minstrels and jugglers were distinct characters, and Chaucer mentions "*minstrels and eke joglours*;" * but they are often confounded or made the same.† The same poet, also, in the following passage, by *gestiours*, does not mean jesters in modern signification, but writers of adventures :

Al maner of mynstralles
And gestiours, that tollen tales
Both of wepinge and of game.—*Housc of Fame.*

That is, those who sang or recited adventures, either tragic or comic, which excited either compassion or laughter.‡

The *jugglers* appear to have practised legerdemain, which was a popular science in Chaucer's time. Thus in the *Squire's Tale* we have :

As jogelours pieyen at this festes grete.

It was an appendage of the occult sciences, studied and introduced into Europe by the Arabians.§

It was customary with the Norman Kings, and the usage prevailed among the other northern nations, to sit at meat attended by their bards, who accompanied the notes of the harp with their voice ; singing the great and heroic acts of their patron, or his predecessors.¶ Thus, says an old historian.|| we owe the finding of the tomb and bones of Arthur (the British king), to the curiosity of Henry II. ; before whom a Welsh harper playing, in his song declared that the body of that royal Briton, lay entombed at Glastonbury, between two pillars, which place being opened by King Henry's order, it was duly found.* *

In the same way, the most dignified ecclesiastics were amused and entertained, by songs and recitals of an historical or legendary character, hence it was not deemed an occurrence unworthy to be recorded, that when Adam de Orleton, bishop of Winchester, visited his Cathedral Priory of Saint Swithin in that city, a minstrel was introduced, who sang the *Song of Colbrond*, a Danish giant, and the tale of *Queen Emma delivered from the ploughshares*, in the hall of the prior, in the year 1338.† †

The king's minstrel was an office of rank in the courts of the Northern monarchs, and bore the title of KING or Chief of the minstrels. This officer is named in an account of the fifth year of Edward I., and again in a like record, dated the fourth year of Edward II., when in company with various minstrels, he exhibited before the King and his court, then held at York, and received forty marks to be distributed by him among the fraternity.‡ ‡

A safe conduct to cross the seas, was granted to the *Rex Ministrallorum*, by Richard II. ; it being an ancient custom for minstrels and heralds to repair to foreign courts on great festivals and solemn occasions.§ §

A learned French antiquary was of opinion, that anciently the French heralds, called *Hiroux*, were the same as the minstrels, and that they sung metrical tales at festivals. || || Herald's were necessarily connected with the minstrels at public entertainments, and must therefore have acquired a facility of reciting adventures ; and of the former receiving fees or largess in common with the latter, there are ample proofs.¶ ¶

* *Romaunt of the Rose*, v. 764.

† Warton, ii., 210. In some instances, however, *mimi*, *joculatores*, *lusores*, and *citharistae*, all seem alternately, and at different times, to have exercised the same arts of popular entertainment.—*Ibid.*, 97 It is likewise positively affirmed in the *Essay on the Ancient Minstrels*, to which I have previously referred, that all the different names were given indiscriminately.—Percy, *Rel. Eng. Poet.* lxi. That there was a union of talents, at least frequently, also appears from Fauchet, *Origine de la Langue et Poésie-Françoise* (1581), i., ch. viii., 72. cf. Strutt, *supra*.

‡ *Ibid.*, 85, 334 ; Chaucer, edit. Morris, v., 245, ver. 107.

§ E.E.T.S. xxx., 34.

|| Strutt, *Manners and Customs of the Inhabitants of England*, ii., 20.

¶ William of Malmesbury, in *Antiq. Eccles. Glasc.*

** This, and what follows in the text, will be hereafter relied upon, also a further citation, which I subjoin :—Edward III. established at Windsor a fraternity of twenty-four Knights, for whom he erected a round table, according to a similar institution of King Arthur. Anstis treats the notion, that Edward had any retrospect to King Arthur, as an idle and legendary tradition. But the fame of Arthur was still kept alive, and however idle and ridiculous the fables of the round table may appear at present, they were then not only universally known, but firmly believed.—Warton, ii., 236.

†† These were local stories. Guy fought and conquered Colbrond, a Danish champion, just without the northern walls of the City of Winchester, in a meadow to this day called *Danemarche* : and Colbrond's battle-axe was kept in the treasury of St. Swithin's priory till the dissolution.—Wharton, *Anglia Sacra* i., 211. Queen Emma was a patroness of the cathedral, in which she underwent the trial of walking blindfold over nine red-hot ploughshares.—Warton, ii., 97.

‡‡ Strutt, *Sports and Pastimes of the People of England*, 146.

§ § Anstis, *Reg. Ord. Gart.* i., 303.

|| || Carpentier, *suppl. Ducango, Gloss.* ¶ ¶ Warton, ii., 290 ; Anstis, *Reg. Ord. Gart.* i., 56, 108.

In the fourth year of Richard II., John of Gaunt erected at Tutbury, in Staffordshire, a court of minstrels similar to that kept at Chester,* and which like a Court-leet, or Court-baron, had a legal jurisdiction. †

The *Joculator Regis*, or king's juggler, was also an officer of note in the royal household, and we find from Domesday Book, that *Berdic*, who held that appointment in the reign of the Conqueror, was a man of property. In the succeeding century, or soon afterwards, the title of *Rex Juglatorum*, or king of the jugglers, was conferred upon the chief performer of the company. Both the office and the title were retained in the royal household until the time of Henry VIII. ‡

In the reign of Stephen there arose a new class of *trouvères* (or poets), who took their subjects from national history.

Richard I. prided himself on his poetic talents, and he was the patron of jongleurs and *trouvères*, whose works, as far as we are now acquainted with them, became more numerous at this period.

Some of these *trouvères* were monks, and cannot in strictness be termed minstrels, as they did not recite their own works, but committed them to memory, a practice also observed by the clergy at this time. ||

William, Bishop of Ely, Chancellor to Richard I., invited to his master's court many minstrels or troubadours from France, whom he loaded with honours and rewards. These poets imported into England a great multitude of their tales and songs; which before or about the reign of Edward II. became familiar and popular among our ancestors, who were sufficiently acquainted with the French language. §

It is well-known that Edward I., while he was yet heir to the throne, and in the Holy Land, was attended by a *citharædus* or harper; and it has been conjectured that he contracted a love for this instrument, in some of those expeditions into Wales, which he undertook in the lifetime of his father. On the same authority, it is related that the harper referred to succeeded in killing the assassin who stabbed Edward with a poisoned knife at Ptolemais. ¶ After this, the reported massacre of the Welsh bards by the same King has a fabulous ring, and appears to be wholly destitute of foundation.

In the reign of Edward II., owing to the privileges they enjoyed, and the long continuance of public favour, many persons assumed the character of minstrels, to the disgrace of the profession. To restrain this evil an Ordinance was enacted A.D. 1315, which ordains that "if any one do against [it], at the first tyme he [is] to lose his minstrelsie, and at the second tyme to foresweare his craft, and never to be received for a mynstrel in any house." * *

At the coronation of Henry V. the number of Harpers in Westminster Hall was very considerable, and these undoubtedly accompanied their instruments with heroic rhymes. † †

The Ordinance of A.D. 1315, must have proved ineffectual, for we find the same grievances recurring under Edward IV., who accordingly granted a charter—A.D. 1469—by which he created, or rather restored, a "perpetual Fraternity or Guild," such as the king understood the brothers and sisters of the fraternity of minstrels to have possessed in former time. This was placed under a marshal, ‡‡ appointed for life, and two wardens, who were empowered to admit brothers and sisters into the Guild, to regulate, govern, and also to punish, when requisite, all such as exercised the profession of minstrels throughout the kingdom. || ||

The establishment, or confirmation, of a Guild or confraternity of minstrels, at Beverley, in 1555, by a local ordinance, shows that the ancient governors of that town, had not lost the relish for merriment and song, which characterised their Saxon ancestors.

* *Infra*, p. 8.

† Percy, *Rel. Anc. Eng. Poet.* xxxvi.

‡ *Ibid.* xciii.

|| Wright, ii., xxi.

§ Warton, ii., 109.

¶ Gale, *Angl. Script. Vet.*, ii., 591.

* * Leland, *Collectanea* app. vi. 37.

† † Warton, iii., 40. The Abbé Le Gendre, in his description of a Feast, on the occasion of a coronation, observes:—Il y avoit l'Après dînée, *Pesche, Jeu, Chasse, Danscurs de Corde, Plaisantins, Jongleurs Pantomimes*. Les Plaisantins faisoient des contes, les Jongleurs jouoient de la vielle, et les Pantomimes par leur Gestes representoient des comedies.—*Mocurs at Coutumes des François*, 24.

‡‡ Heroby putting an end to the office and title of King of the Minstrels,—for a copy of the charter appointing whom, see Blount's *Law Dict.*, s.v. King.

|| || The charter is printed in full, in Rymor, *Fœd.* xi., 642, and Hawkins, *Hist. of Music*, 695. Charles I. granted a charter to some of the most eminent musicians, by the style of marshal, wardens, and cominalty of the arte and science of Musick. This was revived at the Restoration—15 Jul. 11 Car. II—and recites the charter of Edw. IV. The corporation is now extinct, but its "Orders for regulating the Arte and Science of Musique," from Oct. 22, 1661, to July 29, 1679, are to be found in Harl. MS., 1911, f. 43.

If any reliance may be placed in the preamble to this instrument "from the tyme of kyng Athelstone of famous memorie, all or the more part of the mynstralls . . . dwelling or serving . . . between the rivers of Trent and Twede," were in the custom of visiting Beverley annually, at the Rogation days, in order to choose "one alderman, with stewards and deputies, authorized to take names, and to receyve customable dueties of the bretherin of the sade mynstralls fraternytie."*

Later in the century, the minstrels appear to have forfeited a great deal of their popularity, since we find in an act against vagrants, passed in the 39th year of Queen Elizabeth, that they are included among the rogues, vagabonds, and sturdy beggars, which this statute was intended to repress, and subjected to like punishments.

It merits attention, that both by the charter of Edward IV., and the law of Queen Elizabeth, as well as by the stat. 17 Geo. II. c. 5, certain privileges are reserved to the minstrels of Cheshire, derived from grant, prescription, or lawful usage.

The rights or immunities which the Parliament of Great Britain has shown itself so tender of infringing, is founded on an event, of which the following relation is to be met with in the works cited below.†

In the time of King John, Randle the third, surnamed Blundevil, Earl of Chester, having many conflicts with the Welsh was at last distressed by them, and forced to retreat to the castle of Rothelent in Flintshire, where they besieged him, who presently sent to his constable of Chester, Roger Lacy, surnamed Hell, for his fierce spirit, that he would come with all speed, and bring what forces he could for his relief. Roger having gathered a tumultuous rout of Fiddlers, Players, Cobblers, and debauched persons, both men and women, out of the City of Chester (for it was then the fair there), marched immediately with them to the Earl.‡ The Welsh, perceiving a great multitude coming, raised the siege and fled. The Earl coming back with his Constable to Chester, gave him power over all the Fiddlers and Shoemakers of Chester, in reward and memory of his service.

The story goes on to say that John, son of the Constable, conferred the authority over the profligates of both sexes on his steward, one Dutton of Dutton.

Another account has, that the Earl granted, to Lacy, by Charter, the patronage and authority over the minstrels and the loose and inferior people, who, retaining to himself that of the lower artificers, conferred on Dutton the jurisdiction of the minstrels and harlots.‡

The right of licensing these two classes remained in the same family, and was successfully vindicated in a court of law in the fourteenth year of Henry VIII.

Blount observes: "The heirs of Henry de Dutton, at this day [1679], keep a court every year upon the feast of St. John Baptist, at Chester, being the fair day, when all the minstrels of the county and city, do attend and play before the Lord of Dutton upon their several instruments.§

Many of the metrical romances were preserved orally by successive jongleurs, and when committed to writing they differed much from the original copy. This is the reason that different manuscripts of the earlier romances, taken down from the recital of different persons, vary so much from one another, as in the case of the *Chanson de Roland*.¶

The Latin MSS. of the twelfth century contain many allusions to the existence of the jongleurs and trouvères, but it was not until the thirteenth century that their compositions were preserved in writing; and then their history in England becomes more complicated, because a more purely national literature was springing up, in which the other was gradually merged.**

The art of the minstrel seems, from very early times, not only to have found much favour among the clergy, but to have been cultivated by them to the prejudice of those spiritual functions which they were more particularly called upon to discharge.

Thus, in the Saxon canons given by King Edgar, A.D. 769, it is ordered, that no priest shall be a poet, or exercise the mimical or histrionical art in any degree, either in public or private.†† But as in the King's address to Dunstan, the primate, on the same occasion, the *mimi* (or minstrels) are said both to sing and dance,‡‡ the prohibition was scarcely

* Poulson, *Beverlac*, 302.

† Loycester, *Hist. Antiq. Cheshire*, ii. ch. vi.; Blount, *Ancient Tenures of Land made public*, 156.

‡ It seems that the Earl had rendered himself famous by his prowess, and that his exploits were celebrated in rhymes and songs down to the time of Richard II. Of this, a proof will shortly be given in the text.

¶ Percy, *Rel. Anc. Eng. Poet.*, xxxiii.

§ *Ancient Tenures. loc. cit.* The story is also related by Daniel King, in his *Vale-Royall of England*. ii., 29.

¶ Wright, ii., xxi.

** *Ibid.*, xxii. **

†† Spelman, *Concil*, i., 455.

‡‡ *Ibid.*, 477. Carpentier mentions a "Joculator qui sciebat tombare, to tumble."—*suppl.* Ducange.

an unreasonable one. *Mimus* seems sometimes to have signified The Fool, but more frequently a mimic or gesticulator.* After the conquest, however, metrical compositions penetrated into the service of the church, and there is in existence a homily or exhortation on the Lord's prayer, in verse, written before A.D. 1200,† and during the same century England had seen an English sermon in regular rhyme.‡

In the British Museum there is a set of legendary tales in rhyme (of about A.D. 1300), which appear to have been solemnly pronounced by the priest to the people on Sundays and holidays.§ This sort of poetry was also sung to the harp by the minstrels, instead of the romantic subjects usual at public entertainments.|| Legends of the saints, it may be observed, were sung (or recited) in the same way at feasts.¶

The old preachers, from the twelfth to the fifteenth century, in general made great use in their sermons of stories and fables. Among the Harleian MSS. (Brit. Mus.) there is a very ancient collection of two hundred and fifteen stories, romantic, allegorical, religious, and legendary, which were evidently compiled by a professed preacher for the use of monastic societies. Some of these appear to have been committed to writing from the recital of bards and minstrels, and others to have been invented and written by troubadours and monks.**

The minstrels were always welcome visitors at the religious houses, and a friar in "Pierce Plowman" (about A.D. 1377) is said to be much better acquainted with the "Rimes of Robin Hood," and "Randal, Erle of Chester," than with his Pater-noster.

It appears that the minstrels sometimes shaved the crowns of their heads like the monks, and also assumed an ecclesiastical habit; this was probably an external garment only, and used when they travelled from place to place.†† The following anecdote will show that the ecclesiastics and the mimics were not always readily distinguished from each other.

Wood relates a story of two itinerant priests coming toward night to a cell of Benedictines, near Oxford, where, on a supposition of their being mimes, or minstrels, they gained admittance. But the cellarer, sacrist, and others of the brethren, hoping to have been entertained with their *gesticatoriis ludicrisque artibus*, and finding them to be nothing more than two indigent ecclesiastics who could only administer spiritual consolation, and being consequently disappointed of their mirth, beat them and turned them out of the monastery.‡‡

This shows, clearly enough, that at the period in question, as in more enlightened times, the people loved better to be pleased than to be instructed. It will, therefore, occasion no surprise that during the middle ages the minstrels were often more amply paid than the clergy. In the year 1430, at the annual feast of the fraternity of the Holy Cross, at Abingdon, twelve priests each received four pence for singing a dirge, and the same number of minstrels were rewarded each with two shillings and four pence, beside diet and horse-meat.§§ In 1441, eight priests were hired from Coventry to assist in celebrating a yearly obit in the priory of Maxtoke; as were six minstrels, called *mimi*, to sing, harp, and play, in the hall of the monastery. Two shillings were given to the priests and four to the minstrels, and the latter are said to have supped in *camera picta*, or the painted chamber of the convent, with the sub-prior.¶¶

It is worthy of our attention that the *status* of the secular clergy¶¶ at this time was by no means a high one. In 1362, Edward III., on the complaint of the Commons that priests had become very dear after the pestilence, ordained that no secular man of the realm should pay more than five marks to a chaplain or six to a priest, as wages for a year.*** This law is cited in the stat. 2, Hen. v., c. ii., by which the yearly wages of chaplains

* Warton, i., 132. † Printed in E.E.T.S., xxix., 55.

‡ *Standard English*, 77, 79; see Morris, *Specimens of Early English*, i., where some "Sunday Sermons" in verse, of (about) 1330, are given. § Harl. MS., 2391. || Warton, ii., 62.

¶ See *Life of St. Marine, Virgin*—Harl. MS., 2253.

** Harl. MSS. 463. See further, *Latin stories of the 13th and 14th centuries* (Percy Soc.); and Warton i., 328. †† Strutt, *Sports and Pastimes*, 145.

‡‡ *Hist. Antig. Univ. Oxon.*, i., 67.—*Sub ann.*, 1224. Besides such clerks as held chauntries in the nature of benefices, there were others who were mere itinerants, wandering about the kingdom, and seeking employment by singing mass for the souls of the founders.—Hawkins, 207. Fuller says, that the ordinary price for a mass sung by one of these clerks was fourpence; but that if they dealt in the gross it was forty marks for two thousand.—*Worthies of Essex*, 339.

§§ Hoarne, *Lib. Nig. Seacc.* appendix, xii. ¶¶ Warton, iii., 101.

¶¶ In the Roman Church, *secular* clergy are those whose duty lies in the outer world, e.g., parish priests, and those who do not belong to any religious Order, like the *regular* clergy, so called from the Latin *regula*, a monastic rule. *** 36 Edw. III., c. viii.

and priests were not to exceed seven and eight marks respectively, in each case "for board, apparel, and other necessaries." It was frequently contended that chaplains came within the purview of the Statute of Labourers, but this statute was always held to apply only to those who worked with their hands.* In an action against one of this class, it was decided that the writ was not maintainable by the statute, "for you cannot compel a chaplain to sing at mass, for at one time he is disposed to sing, and another not; therefore you cannot compel him by the statute."† It will be seen further on that the amusements of the humbler ecclesiastics of those early days, as well as their social position, are of some importance.

After the crusades, in the romances, the Soldans and the cities of Egypt and Syria became the favourite topics.‡

The troubadours of Provence, many of whom accompanied their barons to Palestine, are said to have picked up there numberless extravagant stories, and at their return enriched romance with an infinite variety of oriental scenes and actions.§

In the meantime we should recollect that the Saracens or Arabians, the same people who were the object of the crusades, had acquired an establishment in Spain about the ninth century; and that by means of this earlier intercourse many of their fictions and fables, together with their literature, must have been known in Europe before the Christian armies invaded Asia.||

It has been imagined that the first romances were composed in metre, and sung to the harp by the poets of Provence at festive solemnities; though an attempt has been made to prove that the French troubadours acquired their art from the bards of Normandy, which would support the theory that metrical romances are lineally descended from the historical odes of the Scandinavian scalds. But Mr. Thomas Wright animadverts on the temerity of seeking the origin of romance in any one source, or of tracing the progress of romance from one people to another, and illustrates his position by pointing out that while there is no nation which has not probably borrowed some of its romantic literature from other nations, there is also none which has not a certain share of home-grown romance. In the opinion of the same writer, the Teutonic tribes possessed many of the *fabliaux* before they were known to Western Europe.¶

Here, however, the excellent authority from whom I have last quoted seems to be slightly at variance with himself, of which the following will afford an illustration.

"The *fabliaux*, or short metrical tales, form a large portion of the French literature of the thirteenth century. They were recited by the *joculares*, *jogelours*, or wandering minstrels, to amuse the feudal barons and knights and relieve the dulness of the evenings.

The character of the *jogelour* was apparently borrowed from the Arabs, perhaps through the Spanish Moors; and the tales which he told may in many instances be distinctly traced to Oriental models.

The number of French *fabliaux* found in English manuscripts . . . shows that they were no less popular in our island than on the continent; yet it is singular that we should have so few instances of English translations. This, however, may be accounted for in some degree by the great destruction of English popular literature, much of which, *existing orally*, was perhaps never committed to writing, or, at least, seldom in a permanent form."**

What has been related of the *Fabliaux* may tend to dissipate in some slight degree the haze with which the early legends of Masonry are surrounded. The latter, we first meet with in a written poem, and the inference will be permissible (as I shall hereafter argue at some length), that could we trace a little higher, we should find that most, if not the whole of them, while retaining a metrical form, were recited orally, without having been committed to writing to all—very much in the same way that the *fabliaux* were by the *jongleurs* (or *jogelours*). Indeed, the parallel may be extended. The *fabliaux*, it has been suggested, were of oriental origin, and came to Europe through the Moors. Very much the same thing may be said with regard to certain distinctive features in the legend of Masonry. The early origin of geometry is wrapped in obscurity, but the ancient tradition was, that the Egyptians were led by necessity to the invention of the science in order to furnish them with a means of recovering their old landmarks, which were obliterated

* Reeves, *Hist. Eng. Law*, ii., 274.

† *Year-book*, 10, Hen. vi.

‡ Warton, ii., 106.

§ *Ibid.*, 107.

|| *Ibid.*, 108.

¶ Warton, ii., 108.

** Wright, *Anecdota Literaria*, i. Barbazan tells us "Les Contes ou récits d'avantures gaios, vraies ou fausses, pour divertir et amuser, se nommoient Fabel, Fablel, ou Fabllau — *Fabliaux et Contes, Des Poetes François, des XII, XIII, XIV, & XV Siècles.*

yearly by the inundations of the Nile.* This, it is true, had no foundation in fact, though we should do well to recollect that it was supported by the great authority of Herodotus. But it is with the leading part played by Euclid of Alexandria, "the world famous geometer," as a teacher of the science, that we are more concerned. His school of mathematics was so renowned that Alexandria continued for ages the great resort for mathematicians. The conquest of Egypt by the Arabs was finally consummated by the surrender, after a fourteen months' siege, of the city of Alexandria, A.D. 640. Early in the following century, A.D. 712, Roderick, "the last of the Goths," was routed and slain at Xeres, and Spain passed under the dominion of the Moors.

The Arabians† were satisfied at first with translations of Euclid, Apollonius, and others, but ultimately left their masters behind in these studies. They continued to extend their conquests, and their frequent incursions into Europe before and after the ninth century, and their absolute establishment in Spain, imported the rudiments of useful knowledge into nations involved in the grossest ignorance, and unpossessed of the means of instruction.

Universities were founded in the more important cities of the Peninsula, libraries were collected, and pupils repaired from many parts of Europe to the famous schools of the Saracens, particularly to those at Cordova and Toledo. It is not a little remarkable that what is justly known as the "dark ages" in the rest of Europe, was a period of intellectual light and splendour in Arabian Spain. In a word, the literature, arts, and sciences of the Arabs formed the connecting link between the civilizations of ancient and modern times: and the culture they introduced into the countries they conquered has in almost every instance outlasted the rule of the conquerors themselves. To them, at least indirectly and by deduction, are due most of the useful arts and practical inventions laboriously perfected by later nations.‡

"Geometry," observes Wright, "is found in the Anglo-Saxon lists of sciences; and tradition—apparently in after times—has given to the reign of King Athelstan the honour of its first introduction."§ If we pass over the commentators of the Alexandrian school, the first European translator of any part of Euclid was Boetius (about), A.D. 500, whose best known work, *de Consolatione Philosophiae*, though not his selection from the "Elements," was rendered into the vernacular idiom by King Alfred.

Some centuries after Boetius; Euclid was fully translated into Arabic, from which it was re-translated by Athelard, of Bath, 1110-20, and used by him in the school, opened after his travels, in France or Normandy, where he taught the Arabian sciences. That these were then new among the Christians of the West, we learn from a passage in one of his own writings which should lay at rest the conjecture, arising out of a legend related by William of Malmesbury, that they were introduced long before by Gerbert—better known as Pope Sylvester II.

Four of Athelard's translations from the Arabic are enumerated by his biographers, the most important being the Elements of Euclid, which became the text book of all succeeding mathematicians, and was first printed—with a commentary ascribed to Campanus of Novara—at Venice, in 1482.||

Pope Sylvester II., to whom reference has been made, and who died at a great age, A.D. 1003, was regarded as a sorcerer by the ignorant on account of his knowledge of chemistry and physics derived from the Spanish Arabs.

An elegant writer observes:—"Mohammedan Spain was governed during [the tenth] century for nearly fifty years by one monarch, the famous Abder Rahman III. Authors in every branch of literature appeared, so that while the rest of Europe sat in darkness, Spain was a focus of intellectual light. Thus it was that lovers of learning like Gerbert stole away into Spain, and purchased, at the risk of all kinds of imputations, the key of knowledge from the infidel Moor."¶

* See the Cooke MS., II. 455-78.

† The terms *Moor* and *Moorish* have also been used as synonymous with *Arab*, *Saracen*, or even *Mohammedan*.

‡ Warton, i., 190; *Book of Dates*; and *Encycl. Brit.*, 9th edit., ii., 264, 265.

§ *Biog. Brit. Lit.*, i., 83.

|| *Ibid.*, ii., 95, 97, 100; Halliwell, *Rara Mathematica*, 57.

¶ Heath, *Historic Landmarks in the Christian Centuries*, 141. Thomas, afterwards Archbishop of York (1070), and the following Englishmen—who "flourished" about the years 1143, 1170, and 1175-85 respectively—Robert de Retines, Alfred the Philosopher, and Daniel de Merlai (or *Merlac*) are said to have visited Spain in order to make themselves acquainted with the Arabian learning.—*Biog. Brit. Lit.* ii., 24, 116; 220; Warton, i., 209; and Wood, *Antiq. Univ. Ox.*, i., 56.

But to descend from generals to particulars, the Society of Freemasons has, by a consensus of authority,* been regarded, until quite recently, as a body of men practising a style of architecture derived by them from the Arabians.

This belief took its rise from a passage in the well-known work of Christopher Wren, the younger, wherein the following theory or conjecture is ascribed by him to his father, Sir Christopher, the famous architect:—

“He was of opinion that what we now vulgarly call the *Gothick* ought properly and truly to be named the *Saraccenic Architecture refined by the Christians*. [The Saracens] fell into a new Mode of their own Invention, tho’ it might have been expected with better Sense, considering the *Arabians* wanted not Geometricians in that Age, nor the *Moors*, who translated many of the old *Greek* Books. The Holy War gave the Christians who had been there an Idea of the *Saracen* Works, which were afterwards by them imitated in the West, and they refined upon it every Day, as they proceeded in building Churches.”†

Then follows the well-known statement, which, attributed to Sir Christopher Wren, “Grand Master”‡ of our Society, long held possession of the encyclopædias:—

“The *Italians* (among which were yet some *Greek* Refugees), and with them *French*, *German*, and *Flemings*, joined into a Fraternity of Architects, procuring papal Bulls for their Encouragement and particular Privileges; they stiled themselves Freemasons, and ranged from one Nation to another, as they found Churches to be built. Their Government was regular, and where they fixed near the Building in Hand they made a Camp of Huts. A Surveyor govern’d in chief; every tenth Man was called a Warden, and over-looked each nine. Those who have seen the exact Accounts in Records of the Charge of the Fabricks of some of our Cathedrals near four hundred Years old, cannot but have a great Esteem for their Economy, and admire how soon they erected such lofty Structures.”§

The opinion of Sir Christopher Wren (if really his) will take us back to the beginning of the thirteenth century, being in accord with, and it is more than probable based in great part upon, the tradition which dates the introduction of Masonry into England at about the time of Henry III. || This period, as observed in the cumbrous essay of Governor Pownall, synchronizes with that in which “the Gothic architecture came forward into practice as a regular established order;”¶ or, to quote from an authority of modern date—“From the beginning of the thirteenth century downwards, or a few years sooner or later according to the various countries, all religious, civil, and military edifices were constructed in accordance with the Pointed system.”**

In the well-known text book to which I have last referred it is thus laid down:

“The fraternities or guilds of Masons, from whom the Freemasons derive their origin, may have contributed greatly to the completion of the pointed arch. These fraternities were probably formed as early as the period of transition between the Romanesque and Pointed styles, in order to afford a counterpoise to the organisations of the priesthood.”††

Leaving out of sight, however, the speculations of the writer with regard to the Freemasons, a short extract from that section of his work, wherein he examines the art or style with which they have been popularly associated, will carry a little further the line of enquiry we are pursuing.

Of the Pointed (called also the Gothic or German) style, he observes:—

“It is indisputable that the Arabs were the first systematically to apply the Pointed Arch to architectural purposes, though their arch was not organically complete; but a Pointed system, that is, a style of which the Pointed arch is the elementary basis and which pervades the entire construction, and which is interwoven with it, was of later development, and arose in northern countries, independent of foreign influences. Nevertheless, the Pointed Arch may be said to have been borrowed from the East, and especially from the Arabs.”‡‡

“In the course of the ninth century Sicily was also subjected to the sway of the Arabs, and after the island had attained great prosperity under its new masters, it was again

* *E.g.* “Some have ascribed the principal ecclesiastical structures to the fraternity of Freemasons. depositaries of a concealed and traditionary science. There is probably some ground for this opinion; and the earlier archives of that mysterious association, if they existed, might illustrate the progress of Gothic architecture, and perhaps reveal its origin.”—Hallam, *Europe in the Middle Ages*, iii., 358. cf. *Hist.* i., 257 *et seqq.* † *Parentalia*, or Memoirs of the Family of the Wrens (1750), 306.

‡ It will be sufficient to state, that this office did not exist, at the time when Wren is alleged to have held it.

§ *Parentalia*, *loc cit.* || *Hist.* ii., ch. xii., *passim.* ¶ *Archæologia*. ix., 110.

** Rosengarten, *Handbook of Architectural Styles*, tr. by W. Collott-Sanders, 290. †† *Ibid.*, 289.

‡‡ *Ibid.*, 287, 288.

conquered by the Normans under Count Roger, 1090 A.D. But the Arab element had now become engrafted in the population, and consequently the Norman chiefs favoured and advanced the Arabian arts and sciences which they found already existent, and caused buildings to be erected by Arab architects.**

It is most probable that after the conquest of Sicily by the Normans, their acquaintance with the Moorish Pointed architecture of that island did not remain without influence on the taste and art of the land of their birth, inasmuch as the connection between the two was continuously and intimately maintained, and that this was the cause of the adoption there of the Pointed arch.†

This, in the division into periods, was the *first*, or Arab-Norman Pointed style, employed originally with æsthetic effect by the Arabs in Sicily, and Lower Italy, and afterwards accepted by the Normans, who adopted it without further development in those countries when they passed under their sway. It belongs to the tenth and eleventh centuries. Afterwards came the *second*, or Transition style, which, generally speaking, prevailed during the twelfth century and at the beginning of the thirteenth; and then the *third*, or Early Pointed style, that is, the style in which the Pointed arch first appeared as the essentially characteristic and predominant element both for the exterior and the interior.‡ Elsewhere, and with reference to the connection of the Freemasons with this style, I have remarked—"without going so far as to agree with Governor Pownall that the Freemasons invented Gothic, it may be reasonably contended that without them it could not have been brought to perfection, and without Gothic they would not have stood in the peculiar and prominent position that they did; that there was mutual indebtedness, and while without Freemasons there would have been no Gothic, but a different, and I think an inferior kind of architecture—without Gothic the Freemasons would have formed but a very ordinary community of trades unionists."§

With regard, however, to the origin of the Gothic (or Pointed) style, although the Saracenic influence may not be so great as was at one time supposed to be the case, there can be little doubt that Sir Gilbert Scott is right in saying that the last hints, as it were, came from the East.||

A word or two are here essential with reference to the later period of Saracenic rule in Spain. After Cordova (1236) and Seville (1247) were regained by the Christians, Andalusia became the last place of refuge for the Mahometan population, and Granada reached the apogee of its fame as the point of concentration for Moorish power and colonization in Spain. It exercised considerable influence on Western Europe, and was distinguished—until ceasing to be an independent kingdom in 1492—as the seat of a brilliant court and a school of arts and sciences.¶

If, indeed, the legends of the Freemasons are of the late mediæval origin to which they have been ascribed, it may, with some show of plausibility, be contended that we are indebted for at least one of them to the Moors (or Arabs) of Granada.

About ten years ago an Arabic MS. came under the notice of Professor Marks, one of our most profound Hebrew scholars. This work referred to a sign or password, known to the Masonic brotherhood, each letter being the initial of a separate word, which would make up the sentence, "We have found our Lord Hiram." The title of the MS., Dr. Marks says, has passed out of his memory, but he believes it was an introduction or preface to the Sunnah, and the date he assigns to it is that of the 14th century. The book was found by him (to the best of his recollection) in the Bodleian Library, and he adds—"I made out its meaning readily, inasmuch as the passage referred to Masonry, which, by-the-by, it traced up to the Patriarchs, if not to Adam himself.**

The author of the History of English Poetry seems to hesitate between the claims of the Saracens and the Gothic Scalds, to rank as the first authors of romantic fabling among the Europeans, though he winds up by awarding the palm to the Arabians.†† But at the present time many theories which met with a ready acceptance, when Warton wrote, are discredited, and in a note to the edition from which I quote, Mr. Wright says, "I think at the present day no well informed scholar would argue for the Arabian origin of mediæval romance."‡‡

* Ibid, 217. † Ibid, 289. ‡ Ibid, 329. § Hist, i., 259. || Hist. i., 263.

¶ The city of Granada attained the zenith of its splendour in the fourteenth century. According to Rosengarten, there were three periods of Arabian architecture in Spain. In the third and best of these the forms were entirely independent, and also richer and more peculiar, while the buildings were characterised by variegated and magnificent ornamentation. This style is illustrated by the buildings of Granada, and, above all, by the Alhambra.—*Handbook of Architectural Styles*, 207.

** A.Q.C., i., 26. †† i., 110, 143. ‡‡ Ibid, 93.

With this, however, must be compared the following, which is also placed over Mr. Wright's name in a subsequent note :—" The *Decameron*, I imagine, belongs to a different class of literature which we do seem to have derived from the Arabs, and of which the best known example is the *Arabian Nights Entertainment*."*

In his *Canterbury Tales*—which only ante-date by a short period, the Masonic poem—Chaucer clearly imitated Boccaccio, whose *Decameron* was then the most popular of books, by writing a set of stories ; and in the *Squire's Tale* the inspiration of the story consists of Arabian fiction engrafted on Gothic chivalry. The original of this tale (though the likeness is not regarded as complete by Mr. Furnival) has been found by the Chevalier de Chatelain in an old French romance, written from Spanish and Moorish sources by Adam Le Roy, king of the minstrels of the Duke of Brabant, in the thirteenth century.†

Chaucer not only imitated but also borrowed largely from Boccaccio, while the latter, if we again look back, derived a great part of the materials for his *Decameron* from the *Gesta Romanorum*. This is a Latin compilation written about A.D. 1340, and to every tale a moralisation is subjoined.

In one of the chapters, or "gests" (clv.) the adventures of an English knight named Albert, in a subterranean passage, within the bishopric of Ely, are related.

This story is said to have been told in the winter after supper, in a castle "cum familia divitis ad focum, ut Potentibus moris est, recensendis antiquis Gestis operam daret,"—when the family of a rich man, as is the custom of the Great, was sitting round the fire, and telling "Antient Gests." Here is a trait of the private life of our ancestors, who wanted the diversions and engagements of modern times to relieve a tedious evening. Hence we learn, that when a company was assembled, if a juggler or minstrel were not present, it was their custom to entertain themselves by relating or hearing a series of adventures.‡

Lastly, and with this I shall forsake the filiation of these stories, some of the oriental apologues in the *Gesta Romanorum*, are taken from the *Fables of Bidpai*—of which book, its latest editor says—"Originating in Buddhism, it was adopted by Brahminism, passed on by Zoroastrianism to Islam, which transmitted it to Christendom by the mediation of the Jews."§

Here, having brought in the Jews, it may be observed that Spain, after its conquest by the Moors, was destined to develop the most prosperous and flourishing condition which the Jews enjoyed in the middle ages, and in this period the diffusion of science by their instrumentality reached its height. The conquest of Spain was, indeed, much facilitated by the co-operation of the Jews.

When, after the battle of Xeres, A.D. 712, Cordova was surrendered to the Moors, the city was left by them in the keeping of the Jews, who had proved themselves staunch allies of the Moslems in the campaign, and who ever afterwards enjoyed great consideration at the hands of the conquerors. The Moors admitted them to their intimacy, and, until very late times, never persecuted them as the Gothic priests had done. Wherever the arms of the Saracens penetrated there we shall always find the Jew in close pursuit. While the Arab fought, the Jew trafficked, and when the fighting was over—Jew, Moor, and Persian joined in that cultivation of learning and philosophy, arts and sciences, which pre-eminently distinguished the rule of the Saracens in the middle ages.||

Many learned Jews began to flourish in the Arabian schools in Spain, as early as the beginning of the ninth century, and it was by them chiefly, for a long period, that learning was communicated from Spain and Africa to the rest of Europe.¶

About the year 1087, great numbers of Jews were permitted to come over from Rouen and to settle in England.** Their multitude soon increased, and they spread themselves in vast bodies throughout most of the cities and capital towns in England, where they

* *Ibid*, 239. † *Ibid*, ii., 337.

‡ Warton, i. 282, *ut supra*. According to Strutt,—“It was a very common and a very favourite amusement, so late as the sixteenth century, to hear the recital of verses and moral speeches, learned for that purpose, by a set of men who obtained their livelihood thereby, and who, without ceremony intruded themselves, not only into taverns and other places of public resort, but also into the houses of the nobility” —*Sports and Pastimes*, 139.

§ A reprint of this work. 1888—originally translated by Sir T. North in 1570—is described as the first “English version of an Italian adaptation of a Spanish translation of a Latin version of a Hebrew translation of an Arabic adaptation of a Pehlevi version” of an Indian re arrangement and expansion of the Jütaka tales, supposed to have been told by the Buddha about 550 B.C.

|| Lane-Poole, *The Moors in Spain*, 24. ¶ Warton, i., 235. ** Hollinshed, *Chron.*, 15.

built synagogues.* In 1189, as we are told by Anderson,† there were fifteen hundred at York—at which place, and in the second digression, I shall return to them.

In my judgment, there is a good deal of the spirit or poetry of the jongleur in the separate lays which together make up the Masonic poem. We have already seen that down to the thirteenth century and later, the compositions of neither jongleurs or trouvères were preserved in writing, but passed from mouth to mouth by song and recitation. Thus, by a gradual transition, our Masonic laws and traditions may have been passed down through the alliterative rhythm of the Anglo-Saxons and the rhyme of the Normans, to find their first place in written language, a remove or two only from the poem under examination.

It is said that poets and priests are the two classes of men that have most influence in keeping a language tolerably well fixed, as with rare exceptions they look back with loving eye to what is old.‡ But although these two offices may have been combined in the unknown compiler of the Regius MS., the field of vision embraced in his retrospection—*i.e.*, if we judge from the general structure of the poem—cannot have been a very large one.

Our ancient poetry, it has been observed, was so strictly national that it clung to every ancient form and every ancient word. The song of Malden§ is written in a tongue which must even then have been antiquated. While Old-English prose has no difficulties which are not soon overcome by use, Old-English verse has to be studied like a foreign language.||

As early as the eleventh century, the difference between the common language of prose, and the traditional language of poetry, was distinctly felt; and in the twelfth century it acted as a hindrance to one who was zealous to preserve all that was left.¶

It is evident, therefore, that the "old book," and other writings (*ll.* 2, 143), from which the clerical penman of the Regius MS. derived any portion of the Masonic information he dispenses to us, could not have been documents of any real antiquity. Indeed, on a closer view of the poem as a whole, indications are not wanting from which it may be inferred that a great part of it was taken down from recitation, but whether this occurred a remove or two from the existing MS., or at the period of its actual birth as a written document, I shall not pretend to decide.

Colour is lent to this supposition, by the great want of cohesion between the several parts of the compilation, as well as by the general structure of the poem.

Thus, the ARTICLES are mainly imparted to us, or (as it were) recited, in the third person; which is varied, in the POINTS, to the second; and on reaching ALIA ORDINACIO, we find our instructor boldly launching out as the direct impersonator of King Athelstan.

This is highly dramatic, and in perfect keeping with the character of a jongleur or minstrel, to whom frequent apostrophes, and the playing of many parts, would be both usual and natural. But in actual poetry, or dramatic writing, as distinguished from oral rhymes, or dramatic recitation, we might expect to meet with a stricter regard to the unities of time, place, and action, that together constitute (in the two former) the principle by which the tenor of the story and propriety of representation is preserved.

It is scarcely possible, therefore, that the passages last referred to, were the rhythmical composition of a single individual. Indeed, it is far more probable that all three were taken down (at some time) from different recitals, and the way they were then addressed to the *ear*, will, I think, furnish the true explanation of the manner in which they now severally meet the *eye*.

Nearly a third of the poem (*ll.* 577-794) is plainly made up of extracts from other treatises, while both ALIA ORDINACIO (*ll.* 471-96) and ARS QUATUOR CORONATORUM (*ll.* 497-543) are so curiously wedged in, without connection of any sort, as to leave no reasonable doubt of either their belonging to the same category, or of their having been taken down, as I have already suggested with regard to the former piece (at some time) from recitation.

Interpolations, however, are a common feature in the most ancient metrical compositions, and are often of a religious and sermonizing character, just as we find exemplified, to no slight extent, in the *collectanea*, which are so largely represented in the document under review.

Of this we are afforded many evidences in the early poem of Beowulf, which (in the words of Mr. Oliphant**) "is to us English what the Iliad was to the Greeks" (and I shall add), or the Regius MS. will always be to the Freemasons.

* Warton, ii., 370. † *Hist of Commerce*, i., 93. ‡ Oliphant, *Old and Middle English*, 85.

§ Composed about A.D. 993.—Warton, ii., 13; Wright. *Biog. Brit. Lit.*, i., 29.

|| Freeman, v., 587.

¶ *Ibid.*

** *Standard English*.

Let me now briefly revert to the invention of printing, and to one of the consequences which followed in its train. The fact must not be lost sight of, that as a country advances the influence of tradition diminishes, and traditions themselves become less trustworthy. "Although," says a famous writer, "without letters there can be no knowledge of much importance, it is nevertheless true that their introduction is injurious to historical traditions in two distinct ways: first by weakening the traditions, and secondly by weakening the class of men whose occupation it is to preserve them.*"

The testimony on this head is abundant, but one more extract is all that I am able to find room for:—

"Our employment of writing, as the sole means of preserving knowledge, enfeebles the power of memory, and causes us to forget the powers of memory. Genealogies entrusted to memory, known *by heart*—that most forcible expression—are written in a living record, compared to which the Heralds' Roll is chaff and straw."†

With the decay of popular literature many oral recitals must have gradually died out, though it is probable that the Laws of the Craft continued to be rehearsed in the old way, long after the Legendary History (or what survived of it) had found rhymeless expression in some early MSS., of which—if we leave out of sight, their lineal descendants, the Old Charges—we can now only track some faint vestiges, in the allusions to pre-existing writings of the Craft, which are met with in the Regius and Cooke *codices*.

In support of this view, it may be remarked, that with the exception of the reference to the Four Crowned Martyrs (*l.* 497)—upon which I shall again touch—there is no *legendary history* related in the poem, that indicates any fount of information which had apparently become dried up, before the originals of our existing Old Charges crystallised into their present forms. But with regard to the *Laws*, the case presents quite another complexion. Both the Regius and the Cooke MSS. divide the *Regulations* into Articles and Points—a mode of arrangement not followed in any of the Old Charges—the former giving fifteen of each and the latter eight. This variance, coupled with the difference of method in the documents of later date, seems to warrant the assumption that several codes of laws, in rhyme or metre, were at some time in existence. This, indeed, will almost ripen into demonstration, if the laws contained in the two histories or disquisitions are carefully collated with those appearing in the "Constitutions" or Old Charges.

Two examples, however, will sufficiently illustrate the position for which I am contending. One taken from the seventh ARTICLE and the other from the seventh POINT.

By the former, the Master is forbidden to harbour a man-slayer: and by the latter, each Mason of lesser degree is strictly enjoined not to have unlawful commerce with the concubines of his fellow workmen. Neither of these injunctions will be found in the Old Charges or in the Cooke MS. Indeed, in the last named, the injunction respecting concubines—which also occurs in the seventh POINT—is of an entirely different character, and peremptorily forbids the keeping of concubines at all.

The legendary history (as well as the laws), which we meet with in the oldest group of documents, must, I think, have come down, for the most part, in two distinct channels, those of poetry and prose.

In the Regius MS. every passage seems to suggest a rhythmic original. It has been usual, indeed, to lay all faults of construction on the compiler. But I believe that in all cases he honestly copied from manuscripts, or took down the verses from actual recitation; though if the latter process is to be carried a little higher—as in my judgment it safely can—then, with regard to it, I consider he must have simply transcribed certain passages that were orally recited in the first instance, and put into writing by an earlier scribe.

If this theory be accepted, then the many discrepancies and redundancies of the poem bear witness to the care and exactitude of the copyist and *not* (as hitherto supposed) to the haste and incompetency of a framer of rhymes. It is quite impossible that the three fragments of legendary history (*ll.* 1, 471, 535), or four, if the story of the Holy Martyrs is included, were encased in their rhythmical settings by the writer of the MS., or by any other single individual. Indeed, the evidence seems to me to bear in quite another direction, and to justify the conclusion that all the separate pieces in the Regius MS. were derived from metrical originals, though there may have been many conduits by which they were conveyed.

Here, to a limited extent, I must pass over ground already traversed, but in order that my last contention may have its due weight with the reader, some recapitulation is essential.

* Buckle, *Hist. Civilization.*, i., 207: † Palgrave, *Hist. Normandy and England*, i., 12, 13.

Returning to the legendary history, at line 13 a plurality of "clerks" is referred to but a little farther on (l. 35) the number is reduced to one, and we join hands with the Euclid of the prose constitutions. After this (l. 61) the introduction of Masonry into England, in the time of King Athelstan, together with particulars of the Assembly convoked by that monarch, are related. The narrative is then interrupted (l. 87) by recitals of the Articles and Points to be observed by the Masons—but eventually resumed (l. 471), and further details given of Athelstan and his Assembly. ARS QUATUOR CORONATORUM (l. 407) reads to me like an interpolation, but however this may be, at its close (l. 535) we again touch familiar ground, in an earlier portion of the Guild Legend than has, up to this point, been incorporated with the poem. Thus we are brought back to "Noah's Flood" and the "Tower of Babylon," though in the place of Nimrod, who is ordinarily associated with this edifice, we get Nebuchadnezzar. A mistake arising, I imagine, from the actual narrator not exactly recollecting the names of the various characters it was his business to introduce, nor the parts they were supposed to play, or he would have followed Herodotus* and Josephus† in connecting the earlier, rather than the later, of the two Assyrian Kings with the Tower of Babel, or Belus.

This incident disposed of, the "goode clerk Euclide" again figures on the scene (l. 551), and becomes a graduate in the seven sciences, with an enumeration of which the legendary narrative ends, or rather breaks off, for it carries us to the precise starting point of the Legend, as exemplified in the poem, and this fragment of tradition would, therefore, have been better placed had it figured as the first instead of the last of the series.

It will be observed that mention is nowhere made of Solomon, Hiram, Namus Grecus, Charles Martel, St. Alban, the city of York, or Prince Edwin.

In connection with the foregoing, the first question we are called upon to determine is, was any portion of the Masonic poem the rhythmic composition of the person by whose hand the Regius MS. was written?

That a very great part of it was transcribed from other documents, we already know, and the real point for decision is, whether the Masonic fragments—also derived from a like source, or from recitals—were copied (or written down), in prose or rhyme, by the penman of the poem?

No distinction can, I think, be drawn between the historical passages and the laws, in the sense that he may have been a versifier in one instance and a copyist (or scribe) in the other.

This supposition is not only forbidden by the general structure of the poem (as previously referred to), but it is also in the highest degree improbable, that if the penman had exercised the poetic faculty at all, the specimens of his art would be circumscribed within the narrow limits in which it is alone possible that they are contained.

In 1882 I said of the Regius MS. :—It displays rather the features of an epic poem than of a simple ethical code adapted to the genius and requirements of illiterate builders.‡ A closer study of the manuscript has but strengthened this impression, and the following passage, extracted from the Essay on Anglo-Saxon Poetry by Mr. Sweet, to which I have previously referred, will afford an example of the guides by whom I have been led.

"How far the original substructure of separate songs is still visible in the finished epos, depends entirely on the genius of the manipulator, and his command of his materials. *If he is destitute of invention and combination*, he will leave the separate poems unaltered, except, perhaps, in cases of repetition and very obvious contradiction, and merely cement them together by a few lines of his own.

"But if the traditions contained in these songs are handled by a poet, that is to say a man of invention, combination, and judgment, they are liable to undergo considerable modifications. There will be room for *original work* in *connecting* the various incidents and introducing episodes, in removing *incongruities and repetitions*, and in fusing together *two or more different renderings of the same tradition*."§

The italics are mine, and in the comparison I have introduced, I shall ask the reader to at least go so far with me as to admit that much of the manner of the *scop*, or gleeman, may have been inherited by the minstrel, or jongleur. I cannot but think that a priest-poet would have woven the scattered threads of legendary history into an orderly sequence nor do I consider it entertainable for an instant, that one and the same person would have laboriously versified a series of prose extracts, and then have strung them together so

* Lib. i. c. 181.

† Antiq. i. iv. 3.

‡ Hist. i., 80. Epic—*epicus*, Lat., *επιικός*, Gr.—Narrative, comprising narrations, not acted, but rehearsed.—Johnson's Dict.

§ Warton, ii., 9.

loosely and carelessly in a MS., that it is difficult in several cases to perceive their connection. Nor, if he had access to any forms of the Old Charges, is it conceivable that he would have restricted his use of them to extracting therefrom a number of disjointed passages, and serving them up, as it were, without either order or cohesion in rhymes of his own composition. In other words, it is quite impossible to believe that the writer (or penman) of the manuscript saw a full version of the legendary history, and yet contented himself with inserting versified scraps of it in his compilation.

If, then, the Masonic pieces were not clothed in their present literary vesture by the compiler of the poem, it is quite clear that he must have either copied or taken them down from dictation.

The following lines are taken from the concluding verses of John Russell's "Boke of Nurture" :—

As for ryme or reson, þe forewryter was not to blamo,
For as he founde hit aforne hym, so wrote he þe same
and þaughc he or y in oure matere digress or degrade,
blame neithur of us / For wo neuyre hit made ;
Symple as y had insight / somewhat þe ryme y correcto ;
blame y cowde no man / y have no persone suspecte.

The transcriber is not to blame.
he copied what was before him.
and neither of us wrote it.

I only corrected the rhyme.

Of the above, Mr. Furnival says : " On the whole, I incline to believe that John Russell's Boke of Nurture was written by him, and that either the Epilogue to it was a fiction of his, or was written by the superintendent of the particular copy in the Harleian MS., 4,011."*

But however this may be, the lines seem to attest that very frequently the transcription of manuscripts must have been almost, if not quite, a mere manual exercise, and it is indeed quite possible that they would have been equally well placed as an Epilogue to the Regius MS.

In many passages there occur what may be termed "snatches of song," and are suggestive of the minstrel or jongleur, to which attention will be directed as we proceed, but the point I am now upon, is not so much the possibilities of the case in the more remote past, as its probabilities at the date of the MS.

It is evident that the stock of legendary history accessible to, or at any rate availed of, by the compiler, whether existing in manuscript form, or treasured in living memory, was a very slender one. But if the legendary history is meagre, the statutes (or Charges) are diffuse, and in this we have a further presumption of their oral transmission down to some period of time, a remove or two from, or synchronizing with that of the Regius MS.

In the Cooke MS., the preponderance is the other way, as the laws are shorter and fewer, while the legend is both prolix and discursive.

Each compiler, therefore, must have had certain sources of information to rely upon, from which the other was debarred, and the inference I myself draw is, that the Craft Legend has come down to us in two (chief) lines of transmission—one through an oral and rhythmic, and the other through a written and prose channel.

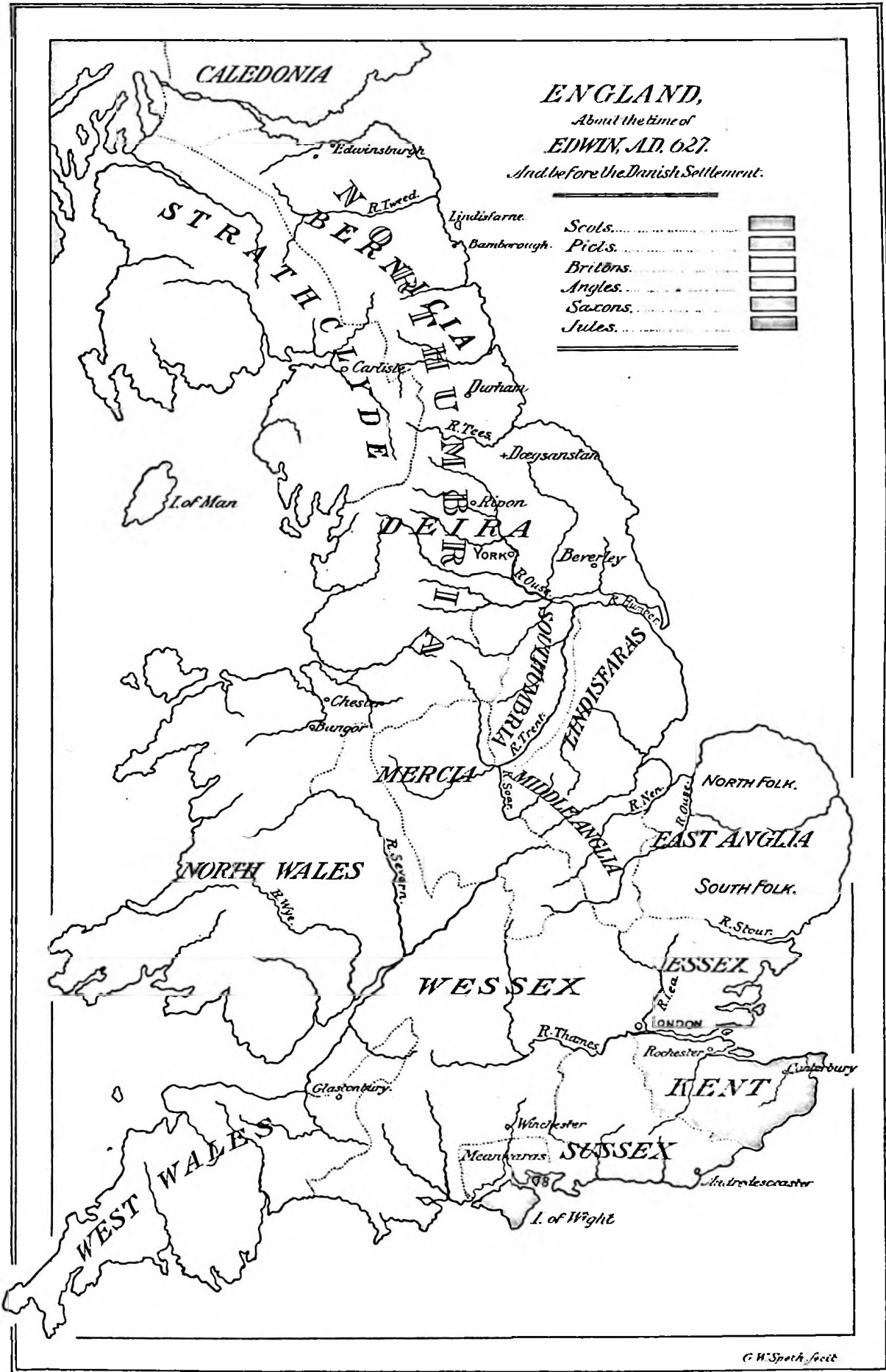
It is possible, indeed, that because the laws given in the Cooke MS. are divided into Articles and Points, as in the poem, while the legendary history it relates is analogous to that contained in the Old Charges, a contention will arise that it is equally founded on poetic and on prose originals. But as it is the design of this Lodge to reach the Manuscript Constitutions by two easy stages, the Commentary on Addl. MS. 23, 198, in volume II. of this series, will deal with the special features of that ancient writing, and thus finally pave the way for an exhaustive criticism of the Old Charges, in their several and collective forms.

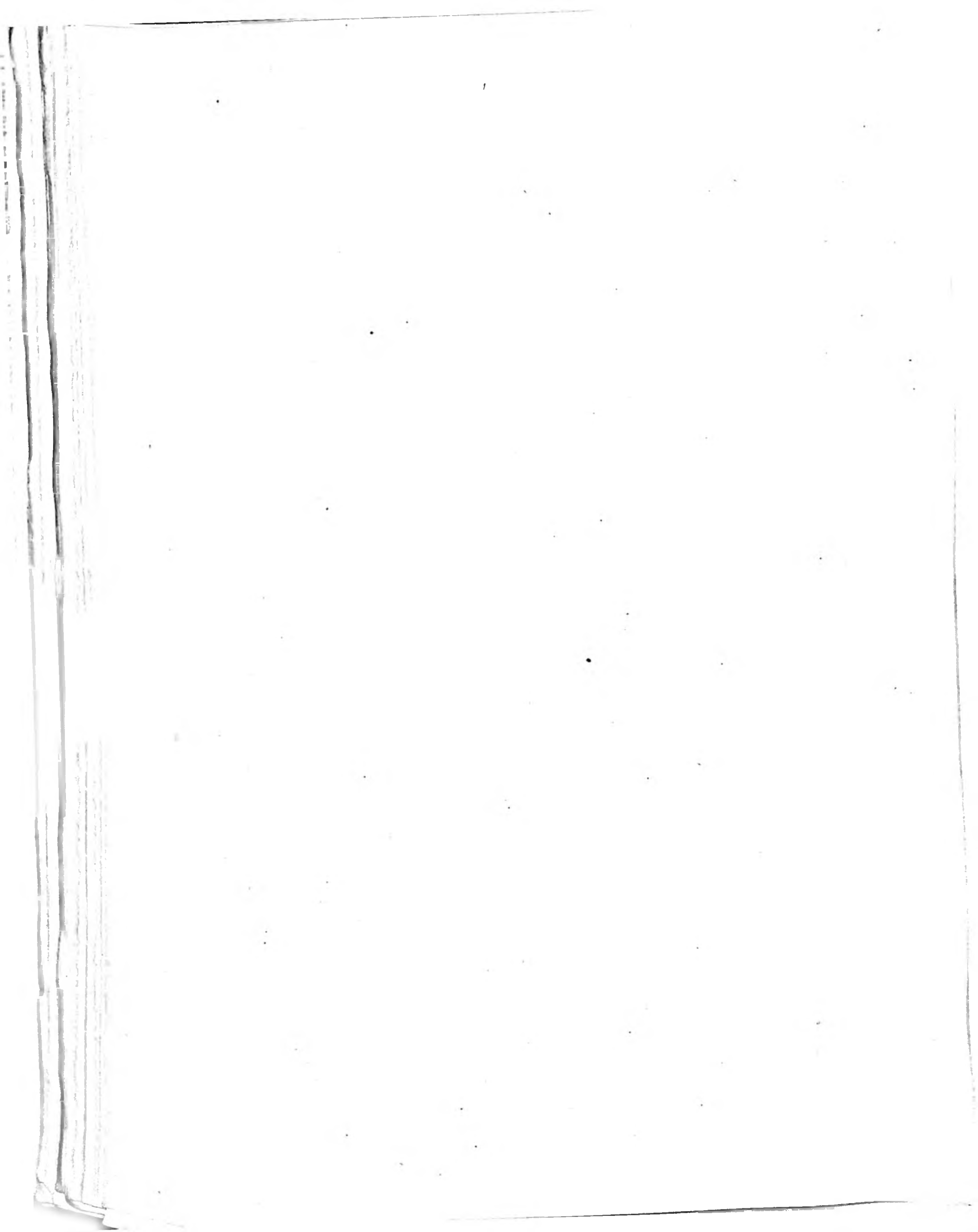
The few and scattered fragments of traditionary history, that we alone meet with in the Regius MS., may perhaps be accounted for, on the supposition of the poem having gradually become denuded of its Northumbrian impress, in passing from the north to the south of England.

This brings us to the York Legend, which will form the subject of a separate study, and I shall defer till its close, the consideration of some remaining points arising out of the general structure of the poem, as their treatment will be more conveniently proceeded with when the traditions of Saxon Northumbria have been passed in review.

* E.E.T.S., xxxii., pref. cix. The lines quoted above, as well as the marginal notes, are taken from the same volume (*Boke of Nurture*, ll., 1244-48).

MAP N^o. I.





SECOND DIGRESSION.

[THE YORK LEGEND.]

“ Out of oldo foides, as men saitho,
Cometh all this new corne from yere to yere ;
And out of oldo bookes, in good faitho,
Cometh all this new science that men lore.”

The “ Old Charges,” or “ Manuscript Constitutions,” concur with the Regius MS. in tracing the establishment of Masonry as a science, to an Egyptian origin, though they bring it into England by a more circuitous route. The discrepancy, however, is immaterial, for whether we regard the prose and metrical versions of the Craft Legend as based upon one and the same original, or as derived from distinct and separate sources, the vast preponderance of our written traditions, and the whisper of tradition, unitedly assure us that—throughout Britain—York was long regarded as the earliest legendary centre of the Building Art. In that ancient city all lines of way seem to converge, and in connection with it, a tradition has grown up, wherein are associated the names of Athelstan and Edwin as patrons of Masonry. This subject, however, a few historical *data* will enable us to consider with greater ease.

The old notion of a heptarchy, of a regular system of seven kingdoms, united under the regular supremacy of a single over-lord, is a dream which has now passed away. Yet, although the English kingdoms were ever fluctuating, alike in their number and in their relation to one another, *seven* stand out in a marked way, which alone supplied candidates for the dominion of the whole island. These were the Jutish kingdom of Kent (449-823) ; the Saxon Kingdoms of Sussex (477-823) ; Essex (526-823) ; and Wessex (519-889) ; and the three Anglian Kingdoms of East Anglia (571-870) ; Northumberland (547-876) ; and Mercia (584-877). Such were the territorial divisions of Teutonic Britain at the end of the sixth century, and it was not unusual for the sovereign of one or other of these states to acquire a certain dominion over the rest, in virtue of which he became distinguished by the famous title of Bretwalda, or Wielder of Britain. Eight Kings, of five different kingdoms—including all except Essex and Mercia, are said to have possessed this supremacy over the rest of their fellows.*

They were Ella, of Sussex ; Ccawlin, of Wessex ; Ethelbert, of Kent ; Redwald, of East Anglia ; Edwin (or *Eadwine*), Oswald, and Oswy, of Northumberland ; and Egbert, of Wessex.

The list, it should be remarked, does not form a continuous series, and it ends, after a considerable gap, with the Prince who established in one kingdom a lasting supremacy over all the rest.

It is singular, no doubt, that several Kings, especially of Mercia, who seem to have been at least as powerful as any of those on the list, such as Penda and Offa, and Ethelbald, whom Henry of Huntingdon speaks of as “ Rex Regum,” are not found on it. But the explanation is suggested that the well-known passage in the Chronicles—A.D. 827—giving the names of the *eight*, was, with respect to the first seven, merely copied from Bede,† and that the Chronicler, a subject of Egbert or of one of his successors, only *added* the eighth (and last) name, unwilling perhaps to record the glories of princes of the rival kingdom.‡

During the seventh and eighth centuries there were many fluctuations in the relative position of the English kingdoms. Not only Essex, but Sussex and East Anglia, each of which had given the nation a single Bretwalda, sink into insignificance, and even Kent falls into quite a secondary position. Wessex stood higher, but its kings had no small difficulty in maintaining their own independence against Northumbrians and Mercians, and the rivalries of the last two powers fill for a long while the most important place in our history.

At the end of the sixth century and the beginning of the seventh, Northumberland was at the height of its power.§

Edwin, the first Christian King of Northumberland, and who ranks as the fifth Bretwalda, has left his name to the frontier fortress of Eadwinesburh or Edinburgh. Edwin was a true Bretwalda in every sense of the word, exercising a supremacy alike over Teutons and Britons. Five Kings of the West Saxons fell in battle against him,|| but at last he died at Heathfield in battle against Penda, the heathen king of the Mercians. A similar fate befell Oswald—restorer of the Northumbrian kingdom, and sixth Bretwalda—and the arms of Penda were no less successful against the West Saxons. This king, indeed, came nearer to achieve the union of the whole English nation under one sceptre than any prince

* Freeman, *History of the Norman Conquest of England*, i., 22, et seqq.

† ii., 5.

‡ Freeman, i., 544.

§ *Ibid.*, 35.

|| A.S. Chronicle, 626.

before the West-Saxon Egbert. He was defeated and slain at the battle of Wingfield, A.D. 655, and Northumberland again became the leading power of Britain. Under her two Bretwaldas, Oswald and Oswy, the English dominion was—apparently for the first time—extended beyond the Forth, and Picts and Scots, as well as English and Britons, admitted the supremacy of the Northumbrian king. But the greatness of Northumberland only lasted until A.D. 685, and after its decline Mercia became the most powerful English kingdom, under three resolute kings—716-819—one of whom, Offa, victorious over all enemies within his own island, as the mightiest potentate of the West, corresponded on equal terms with Charlemagne, the mightiest potentate of the East. For a time Wessex was actually tributary to Mercia, but it again became independent about the middle of the eighth century.*

Egbert was chosen king of the West Saxons, A.D. 800, and in his reign of thirty-six years he reduced all the English Kingdoms to a greater or less degree of subjection. But the eighth Bretwalda did what no other Bretwalda had ever done, by handing on his external dominion as a lasting possession to his successors in his own kingdom.†

The reigns of the son and the grandson of Egbert were almost wholly taken up by the struggle with the Northmen, and Wessex itself nearly fell a prey to the invaders, but by the terms of the Peace of Wedmore, A.D. 878, termed 'Alfred's and Guthrum's Peace,' the Danes were to evacuate Wessex and the part of Mercia south-west of Watling Street, and they were to receive the whole land beyond Watling Street as vassals of the West Saxon King.‡

A large part of England thus received a colony of Danish inhabitants, and the country became divided into Wessex, Mercia, and the *Danelagh*.

Under the Great Alfred all authority was thus lost over East Anglia, Northumberland, and the larger half of Mercia—he was more than king of the West Saxons, but he was less than king of the English.

Edward the Elder, the son of Alfred (901-925), succeeded in becoming, what no West Saxon king had been before him, immediate sovereign of all England south of the Humber, and the princes of Wales, Northumberland, Strathclyde, and Scotland, all submitted to him by voluntary act. §

At the age of thirty, Athelstan (925-940), succeeded his father Edward, though it is doubtful if he was the offspring of a lawful marriage. A fruitless conspiracy was formed against him, in which his half-brother Edwin (of unquestionable legitimacy) is said to have been implicated, whose fate is involved in deep obscurity. The story is, that when he attained the age of manhood, Athelstan ordered him to be sent out to sea in a frail boat, without oars or rowers, and with a single attendant, who survived to be drifted on shore, after witnessing the unhappy prince leap overboard in a paroxysm of despair. But all we know with certainty is, that as related in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, under A.D. 933, "this year Edwin the Atheling was drowned in the sea."

Athelstan added the finishing stroke to the work of his father by first making Northumberland an integral portion of the realm. But as it was dread of the Northmen which had alone drawn Scot and Cumbrian to their acknowledgment of Edward's overlordship, this act of annexation by his successor had no sooner occurred than dread of Wessex took the place of dread of the *Danelagh*.||

Athelstan had therefore to fight for his empire, and he defeated the kings of the Scots, Cumbrians, and Welsh, who in concert with the Danes had formed a confederacy against him, on the field of Brunanburh (937), which was long distinguished as the Great Battle. That fight, looked on at the time as the hardest victory that Angles and Saxons had ever won, still lives in the earliest and noblest of those national lays with which the Chronicles, especially at this period, relieve the direct course of their prose narrative.¶

The victory of Brunanburh rendered Athelstan the undisputed monarch of the English and Emperor of Britain, and nothing is better established than that during his reign England had an unusual connection with foreign countries, and enjoyed an unusual consideration among them. At the court of Athelstan, Haco the Good, king of Norway, Lewis D'Outremer, king of France, and Alan of Brittany were brought up; and his sisters were

* Freeman, i., 35, 38.

† *Ibid*, 39.

‡ *Ibid*, 44, 47. In reality, however, Alfred's rule never extended over the Danes.

§ *Ibid*, 57.

|| Green, *Hist. Eng. People*, i., 83.

¶ Freeman, i., 60. The unchallenged dominion of the whole of Saxon England, the submission of the Welsh and of the Northumbrian Danes, and the alliance and admiration of Flanders, France, and Germany, rewarded the victor of this glorious day.—*Sax. Chron.* 937; Robertson, *Scotland under her Early Kings*, i., 65.

married to the Emperor Otho the Great, Lewis, king of Provence, Charles the Simple, king of France, and Hugh the Great, count of Paris.

But England, which had been rescued from ruin by the genius of the Great Alfred, strengthened by the steady policy of Edward, and raised to an unexampled pitch of glory by the energy and valour of the indomitable Athelstan, threatened, before the close of his eventful career, to relapse into its original disunion when no longer upheld by the arm of the mightiest warrior who ever sat upon the throne of Saxon England.*

The laws of Athelstan exhibit in a fuller degree the same tendencies that prevailed under Alfred. The Frank-pledge or Frith-Guild system had been vigorously enforced under Edward. Its laws were codified under Athelstan, and every freeman was then obliged to belong to some guild or to some lord.†

Guilds, in England, were at first political, and one of the grand elementary parts of our constitution. Their origin, in the opinion of many authorities, must be looked for in the Saxon custom of Frank-pledge—which, itself, according to Minsheu, was borrowed from the Lombards.

Every freeman of fourteen years old and upwards was required to find sureties to keep the peace. This was effected by associations of ten free families, in which every member was responsible for the orderly behaviour of the rest. Therefore, that they might the better identify each other, as well as ascertain whether any man was absent upon unlawful business, they assembled at stated periods at a common table, where they ate and drank together. This sort of assembly was in the seventh century called the *Gibeorscipe*—a banquet, beer-shop, beer-drinking—and it was at such a meeting that the poet Caedmon was called upon to sing, on the occasion of the harp having been handed round to each of the company in his turn.‡ It has been further stated that because this association of pledges consisted of *ten* families, it was called a *decennary* or *tything*, and subsequently, of being composed of such Frank-pledges, a Fribourg, or Frith-guild.§

Thus the responsibility which had hitherto attached to the kindred was thrown upon the district—the *Voisinage*, or neighbourhood—which still appears to have been regulated, like the earlier military systems, upon the immemorial theory of the kindred, each of the lesser associations in which the neighbours chose their *Tunginus*, or *Tything-man*, answering to a *Mæg* under the elected or hereditary *Senior*. The earliest enforcement of the principle of *Voisinage* in England may be referred to the time when Southern Britain was being gradually knit together in one monarchy by the introduction of the principles of Imperial Law.||

Of Frith (or Peace) Guilds there are traces in the laws of Ina (689-728), and they are also referred to in the laws of Athelstan, though it has been affirmed that Edgar was the first to establish the *Frith-borh* as a legal necessity. But it is very probable that the first written law relating to it was merely confirmatory or declaratory, and the fact should not be lost sight of that a considerable portion of the Anglo-Saxon law was never recorded in writing at all.¶ From some very early period, therefore, in Anglo-Saxon times, it became incumbent upon every member of certain classes of society to be enrolled in a Tything, and in a Hundred, for certain purposes of civil government, thus fixing a degree of individual responsibility upon every free member of the community, each of whom was bound to have a *Borh* upon whom it was incumbent to produce him if justice so required it, and who, in case he could not be brought forward within a year, were responsible for him altogether. This *Borh* was the Tything.**

To the Frith Guilds, with their social feasting, succeeded the Guilds devoted to religious, social or trading purposes, and which copied from the former not only their convivialities, but also many other customs. Each of the latter formed a kind of artificial family. An oath of mutual fidelity among its members was substituted for the tie of blood or locality, while the guild feast, held once a month in the common hall, replaced the gathering of the kindred round their family hearth, or the assembly of the Frith-borh at a common table.

We learn from the *Judicia Civitatis Landoniae*, that the statutes of the London Guilds were reduced into writing in the time of King Athelstan. From these, the Guilds in and

* Robertson, i. 68, *ut supra*.

† Pearson, *England during the Early and Middle Ages*, i., 190; A. S. Laws, i., 161, 201, 205.

‡ Bede, *Eccles. Hist.*, iv., 24.

§ Herbert, *Companies of London*, i., 3, 4; Milnor, *Hist. England*, 141.

|| Robertson, ii., 335.

¶ Palgrave, *Rise and Progress Eng. Com.*, i., 58.

** Robertson, ii., 336, 337.

about London appear to have united into *one* Guild, for the purpose of carrying out more effectually their common aims,* and at a later time we find the Guilds of Berwick enacting, "that where many bodies are found side by side in one place, they may become one, and have one will, and in the dealings of one with another have a strong and hearty love."†

In the reign of Edward III., the old name of Guild became generally exchanged for that of Craft or Mystery, and the old title of Alderman gave place to that of Master or Warden.‡

In the twelfth year of Richard II.—A.D. 1389—writs were sent to all the sheriffs in England to make proclamation for the sending up of the returns from Guilds and Crafts, called for by the parliament of Cambridge. The masters and wardens of "Guilds and Brotherhoods" were required to furnish full information "as to the manner and form of the oaths, gatherings, feasts, and general meetings of the bretheren and sisteren;" also as to their liberties, privileges, statutes, ordinances, usages, and customs, and to lay before the King and his council their charters and letters patent, where such existed.

The masters, wardens, and overlookers of the mysteries and crafts, who held any charters or letters patent, were in like manner required to exhibit them.§

The returns sent up by the Social Guilds and the Guilds of Craft, in obedience to these writs, were very numerous, and we shall do well to bear in mind that the close search for "charters" which must have taken place, can only have preceded by a comparatively short interval, the collection and stringing together—either wholly or in part—of the series of verses—the subject of the present commentary.

But before resuming the thread of my argument, it will be convenient to explain—up to a certain point—the positions I have sought to establish by the above gleanings from the facts of history.

In the first place, then, I think we may safely assume that Athelstan having been the first king of all England, was therefore the most natural fountain-head from which a legendary belief in the grant of a Royal Charter to the Masons can be supposed to have arisen. Before his time, England was governed by the laws of the West Saxons, the Mercians, and the Danes. These were in substance the same,|| and many of them were confirmed or re-enacted by Athelstan and his successors, but the weight and authority with which they speak, before and after there was a king of all England, may be likened to the weight and authority appertaining respectively to a provincial or a general synod (or council).¶ No Englishman before the time of Athelstan had ever possessed so much power at home—this fortifies my first conclusion; or so much influence abroad—which suggests an inference of another kind. If there is a "foundation-truth" (as the Germans express it), or even if we only have regard to the common belief in the tradition that the Masonry of England was derived from a foreign source, there is no period which could be more plausibly assigned for its really taking firm root and being established in this country, than the reign of "glorious" Athelstan,** by whom a closer intercourse with the continent was maintained than by any of his predecessors.

But the written traditions of the Craft still await our consideration, and though there is nothing in the poem which tells us, either that there was such a person as Prince Edwin, or such a city as York—the Old Charges are, for the most part, so strikingly in accord, with regard to the existence of one as the patron, and of the other as the traditional centre, of Early British Masonry, that any speculation with regard to Athelstan himself, as a prominent figure in our legendary history, would be incomplete, without including therewith, an attempt at least, to penetrate beneath the mythical colouring by which the other incidents in this part of the narrative are equally surrounded.

The Edwin of the prose legend, I do not think by any process of induction, can be identified with Edwin the Atheling, whose death occurred A.D. 933. It is extremely improbable that he ever visited York. From Egbert to Edward the Confessor, Winchester was the undoubted metropolis of the kingdom. Here Athelstan principally resided, and held his court, as did his (and Edwin's) father previously. Indeed the only scrap of evidence

* *English Gilds*, lxxv.

† Green, i., 210.

‡ Herbert, i., 28.

§ *English Gilds*, 127.

|| It would seem, however, that in Anglo-Northumbria and the Danelagh—contrary to the usually received idea—a greater amount of freedom was enjoyed than in England proper, *i.e.*, Wessex and English Mercia.—*Robertson*, ii., 273.

¶ From Athelstan's time the whole land formed one kingdom under one king, and the king and his Witan possessed direct authority in every corner of it. The King of the English, moreover, was also Emperor of the whole isle of Britain.—*Freeman*, i., 116. See further "The Bretwaldadom and the Imperial Titles," *Ibid*, 542-56.

** Styled by Florence of Worcester, "Strenuus et gloriosus."—*Freeman*, i., 61.

that can be tortured into the semblance of a proof that the Atheling is referred to in the Old Charges, is to be found in the Grand Lodge family—Lansdowne branch—of these documents, where, if we regard the passage, “Edwin . . . was made Mason at Windsor,” as containing an error of transcription, and consider that for “Windsor” should be read “Winchester,” the supposition may, perhaps, become entertainable.

But with this shadowy exception, all the evidence points in the direction of the Bretwalda, Edwin of Northumberland, of whom Dr. Francis Drake, the author of “Eboracum,” thus spoke in his celebrated oration:—“We can boast that the first Grand Lodge ever held in England was held in this City; where Edwin, the first Christian King of the Northumbrians, about the Six Hundredth Year after Christ, and who laid the Foundation of our Cathedral, sat as Grand Master.”*

Here, indeed, the exigencies of the situation carried the speaker a little too far, but the “centre-fact” in his address, divested of its rhetorical colouring, re-appears in the work by which he is best known† and to this I shall presently return.

Edwin had been acquainted with deep adversity in early life, for he was dispossessed of his paternal inheritance, Deira, by his brother-in-law, Ethelfrith, a Bernician, who founded the kingdom of Northumberland by the union of the two states. Persecuted by the usurper, the youthful prince sought refuge with Redwald, king of the East Angles, at whose court the scene is first laid of the story I am about to relate.

Redwald, either terrified by the threats, or cajoled by the promises, of Ethelfrith, pledged his word to the monarch of Northumbria, that he would put to death or surrender the unfortunate refugee.

Edwin, being informed of this decision, disdained to fly, but resolved to stay where he was and await the end.

Suddenly, however, and in the dead of night, a person whose features and attire were equally strange to him, stood by his side.

A colloquy ensued, in which the visitor asked, what reward the prince would give to one who prevented any injury being done to him, and also pledged his word that he should surpass in power all previous kings of England. Edwin having made a suitable reply—then said the other, “But if he who foretells so much good as is to befall you, can also give you better advice for your life and salvation than any of your progenitors or kindred ever heard of, do you consent to submit to him and to follow his wholesome counsel?” Edwin, without hesitation, made the requisite promise, and then the stranger’s hand was laid upon his head, with the injunction—“When this sign shall be given you, remember this present discourse that has passed between us, and do not delay the performance of what you now promise.” Having uttered these words, the speaker is said to have vanished, in order that the prince might understand it was not a man, but a spirit that had appeared to him.‡

After this, fortune smiled upon Edwin, and on the defeat and death of Ethelfrith, in 617, he became king of Northumbria. His kingdom consisted of Bernicia, extending from the Tyne to the Pictish border, and Deira, the tract between the Tyne and the Humber, which, originally independent states, had soon coalesced and taken the collective title of Northumbria.§

In 625, while still a pagan, he espoused Ethelburga, a daughter of Ethelbert, king of Kent, who had been converted by Augustine. Before, however, the marriage took place, Edwin had promised to allow the lady, if she became his wife, to worship, with all her suite according to the Christian faith, and he also promised that he would himself embrace the same religion, if, being examined by wise persons, it should be found more holy and worthy of God.

On leaving Kent, Ethelburga was accompanied by Paulinus, as her chaplain, who had been consecrated Bishop of the Northumbrians—21st July, 625—to preside over the mission.

In the following year an unsuccessful attempt was made on the king’s life by a minion of the king of Wessex, and, on the same evening, Edwin’s wife gave birth to a daughter. The king gave thanks to his gods, but the Bishop, on the other hand, returned thanks to Christ, to whose agency he ascribed these two signal favours; and struck by his earnestness, Edwin promised, that if the God whom Paulinus worshipped should enable him to vanquish

* Speech of the Junior Grand Warden, Grand Lodge of York, Dec. 27, 1726. † *Eboracum*, 472.

‡ Bede, *Eccles. Hist.* ii., 12.

§ Far to the North, from the Humber to the Forth, lay the great realm of the Northumbrians, sometimes united under a single prince, sometimes divided by the Tyne or the Tees into two kingdoms of Bernicia and Deira.—Freeman, i., 25

the king of Wessex, he would renounce paganism and embrace Christianity, while as a pledge of his sincerity he forthwith delivered up his infant daughter to be baptized.

Edwin was victorious over the West Saxons, but the exhortations of Pope Boniface, of his wife (Ethelburga), and of Paulinus, to adopt the true faith were alike ineffectual.

The supreme moment had arrived. The king was alone and wearied with his thoughts. Suddenly Paulinus passed into his presence. A hand was laid upon his head, and "the man of God" asked him, "Whether he recognised that sign?"*

The part played by Paulinus at so critical a moment is ascribed by Bede to the efficacy of his constant prayers, and he states "At length, as we may suppose, it was shown him *in the spirit* what was the vision that had been revealed to the king"† But the alternative has been suggested, that the Bishop acquired his familiarity with the earlier incident *in the flesh*, and that he was, in point of fact, the mysterious stranger, whose prophetic instinct, twelve years previously, had led him to speak and act in the manner already related.‡

Returning, however, to the occurrences as narrated by the Venerable Bede, it may be observed that nothing in his entire works is as beautiful as the story of this conversion.

The king, in obedience to the "sign" communicated to him through Paulinus, expressed his willingness to become a Christian, and called together the Witenagemote (meeting of the wise men) to consider the question. The opinions of his councillors were taken individually, and the speech of Coifi, the pagan high priest, was a very striking one. He saw no virtue whatever in his own religion, and thought that if the gods were good for anything, they would have done something for himself. The next speaker said:—"Thou hast seen, O king, when the fire blazed, and the hall was warm, and thou wast seated at the feast amidst thy nobles, whilst the winter storm raged without and the snow fell, how some solitary sparrow has flown through, scarcely entered at one door before it disappears at the other. While it is in the hall it feels not the storm, but after the space of a moment it returns to whence it came, and thou beholdest it no longer, nor knowest where nor to what it may be exposed. Such, as it appears to me, is the life of man—a short moment of enjoyment, and we know not whence we came nor whither we are going. If, therefore, this new doctrine contains something more certain, it seems justly to deserve to be followed."§

Others expressed similar views, and Paulinus having been heard at length, Coifi, the heathen pontiff, was the first to renounce his idolatry, and when it was inquired who would profane the altars of Woden, he vaulted, by permission, on the king's stallion,|| and girding on his sword, rode, lance in hand, to desecrate the idols and the shrine that he had so long revered.

Shortly afterwards—Easter day, 627—Edwin and his two sons were baptized at York, in a little oratory erected for that purpose, and their example was followed by "all the nobility of the nation, and a large number of the common sort."¶

Paulinus, who had been appointed Bishop of the province, then told the king he ought to build an house of prayer more suitable to the divinity he now adored. By the prelate's directions, therefore, he began to build a magnificent fabrick of stone, *ipso in loco*, where the other stood, and in the midst of all stood the oratory already constructed. The building went on very fast, but scarcely were the walls erected, that is, so far as to come to roofing, when the royal founder was slain, the Archbishop forced to flee the country, and the fabrick left in the naked condition it was then arrived to.**

This calamity was the result of a terrible struggle which had taken place between the pagan and Christian powers. The fiery and savage Penda, of Mercia, aided by a strange ally, Cadwalla, the *Christian* king of the Strathelyde Welsh, broke into Northumbria, and slew Edwin in a great battle at Haethfelth, or Hatfield Chase, in 633. The loss of her protector was a sad blow to the Northern church. The king's bloodstained head was brought to York, and interred in the porch or chapel of St. Gregory, within the minster that he was building.†† This was finished by king Oswald, but I shall here pause to explain why the leading features of the introduction of Christianity into the North have been dealt upon with such particularity.

These are all given on the authority of Bede,‡‡ whose *Ecclesiastical History*—written in

* Bede, ii., 9—12.

† *Eccles. Hist.*, ii., 12.

‡ *Fasti Eboracenses*, 38.

§ Unde si hæc nova doctrina certius aliquid attulit merito esse sequenda videtur.—Bede, ii., 13.

¶ Coifi did not mount the king's horse because there was any journey to make to the temple, but simply to show his contempt for the pagan rule that a priest should only ride upon a mare.—Bede, ii., 13; *Fasti Ebor.*, 41.

¶¶ Bede, ii., 14.

** Drake, *Eboracum*, 472, *ut supra*.

†† Bede, ii., 20; *Fasti Ebor.*, 43; Freeman, i., 35.

‡‡ The other references given in the notes indicate that the passages in Bede, upon which I have relied, have been cited approvingly by several of our most eminent living historians.

Latin—was completed A.D. 731.* “Of the value of the work,” says Dr. Giles, “we can have no better evidence than the fact of its having been so often translated into the vernacular tongue. King Alfred thought it not beneath his dignity to render it familiar to his Anglo-Saxon subjects, by translating it into their tongue.”†

The same writer tells us, “The history of Edwin, with its interesting details, shows that Bede must have had access to highly valuable materials which reached back to the very earliest era of authentic history;” and he goes on to characterize the details given as being “too minute in themselves, and too accurately defined by Bede, to have been derived by him from tradition.”‡

The point, however, that I wish to establish is, not the authenticity of the narrative, but the undoubted fact that it was both extensively read and firmly believed,§ from the time of Bede down to a period far overlapping the crystallization of the traditions of Masonry into their earliest written form.

The zeal and tragic fate of the great Bretwalda have enshrined his name in the calendar, and an interesting account of “St. Edwin, king and martyr,” is given by Capgrave, in his *Nova Legenda*.||

The triumphant pagans ravaged the Northumbrian kingdom, and the Queen and Paulinus effected their escape by sea into Kent. The provinces of Bernicia and Deira fell to different kings, who relapsed into paganism, but were both treacherously killed soon after by Cadwalla. The Strathclyde king then reigned for a time over the Northumbrians, and the period of his sovereignty was described in later times as the “unhappy year.”¶

Oswald, the son of Ethelfrith, and nephew of Edwin, succeeded to the Bernician crown, and in winning the battle of the “Heavenly Field,” where Cadwalla was defeated and slain, became king of all Northumbria, and sixth Bretwalda.

Immediate steps were taken by him to re-establish Christianity in his dominions, and he naturally turned to the particular form of it in which he had been educated. Accordingly, he sought for his purpose the assistance, not of Paulinus, who was in Kent, but of the Culdees, from Iona.** There was no delay in complying with this request, and Aidan, who arrived in England A.D. 634, was appointed by the king to the bishopric of Lindisfarne.††

Under Oswald, the provinces of the Bernicians and the Deiri, which until then had been at variance, were peacefully united and moulded into one people. These fair prospects, however, were soon to be overcast, for his old enemy Penda, the pagan king of the Mercians, having resolved to renew the struggle and make a second attempt to crush the Christian kingdom of the Northumbrians, Oswald, who appears to have anticipated the attack, was killed in a great battle with the Mercians, August 8th, 642.‡‡

The deceased king was succeeded by his brother Oswy—seventh Bretwalda—who while far from exhibiting his virtues, adhered nominally to the same faith, but patronised ecclesiastics of the Roman communion, in whose esteem the Scottish clergy (*Culdees*), were schismatical, and whom they superseded. The great event of this reign was the overthrow of Penda, the victor, successively, over Edwin and Oswald, who acquired the name of “The Strenuous” from his unshaken devotion to the cause of paganism, and incessant hostilities on its behalf.§§

But the greatness of Northumbria lasted no longer than the reigns of Oswy and his son Egfrid. The latter was slain in battle by the Picts—685—and the dominion of the northern province died with him, while the kingdom itself sank into comparative insignificance.||||

As already related, a change of ecclesiastical systems occurred under Oswy, and the name of the prelate by whose influence it was accomplished will next enter into the narrative. Wilfrid of York—described as being in many respects “the Star of the Anglo-Saxon Church”—by his boldness and skill shook off the supremacy of Colman—the third bishop of Lindisfarne—and built up the Benedictine rule upon the ruins of the system of Columba.¶¶

* *Biog. Brit. Lit.*, i., 266, 281. † *Eccles. Hist.*, (Bohn's edit.) pref. xxix. ‡ *Ibid*, xxviii.

§ *Ante*, 23. || 116-20. ¶ *Bede*, iii., 1.

** *Biog. Brit. Lit.*, i., 166; *Fasti Ebor.*, 19; Skeno, *Celtic Scotland*, i., 251.

†† *Bede*, iii., 3. Mr. Robertson observes:—“Culdees were the ministers of York Cathedral, from the date of Oswald's foundation until after the Conquest, and they probably inherited their privileges from the time of Bishop Aidan.”—*Scotland under her Early Kings*, i., 333.

‡‡ Skeno, i., 252. §§ Milner, 60. ||| Freeman, i., 37.

¶¶ *Fasti Ebor.*, 78. At the time of the celebrated conference between Wilfrid and Colman—A.D. 664—as representing the Roman party and the Culdees, respectively, the see of York had been vacant many years, and the kingdom of Northumbria was allowed to remain under the spiritual jurisdiction of the Scottish bishops of Lindisfarne.—*Biog. Brit. Lit.* i., 171.

Wilfrid (634-709), a native of Bernicia, and of noble birth, was afterwards "bishop of York, and of all the Northumbrians, and likewise of the Picts, as far as the dominions of king Oswy extended."* But no place was perhaps so dear to his heart as the little monastery of Ripon, which he ruled both in prosperity and adversity, and where he was lovingly interred at his decease.

Wilfrid may be regarded as the first patron of architecture among the Anglo-Saxons. He surrounded the wooden church, in which King Edwin was baptized, with stone, covered it with lead, and furnished it with windows of glass. The cathedral church of Hexham, and the conventual church at Ripon, owe their erection to his munificence.† The latter became one of the three great churches in Yorkshire, and it was famous throughout England. The privilege of sanctuary and the right of using the ordeal were among the honours conferred upon it by Athelstan. The power of working miracles, which is said to have belonged to Wilfrid in his lifetime, added in after years to the glory of his shrine. His seal was a sovereign specific for the murrain, and his banner went out frequently, as a talisman, to the wars.‡

During the troubled episcopate of Wilfrid—who was twice dispossessed of his see—the vast diocese of Northumbria was subdivided, the plan, as it was finally arranged, in addition to York, placing a bishop at Lindisfarne, Hexham, and Whitherne.§

When Wilfrid first lost his see—A.D. 678—Bosa received as his share the province of Deira, the seat of his bishopric being placed at York.|| But he seems to have made way for Wilfrid on the latter's return about 686, and to have regained his position a few years later, holding it from that time continually until his death, which occurred in 705.¶

Bosa was therefore succeeded, in the lifetime of Wilfrid, by John, or, as he is generally called, "St. John of Beverley," (705-718), who was of noble parentage, and a native of Harpham, in Yorkshire.

Bede has been very elaborate on the life and miracles of John, and dwells upon his character for piety and learning.** He is claimed, indeed, by the University of Oxford, as her first master of arts, but it has still to be proved that there was an university at Oxford at that time.††

After his translation from Hexham to York, he chose as the place for his retirement, a village called Inderawood—or the wood of the Deiri—which was changed in later years to Beverley (*Beofor-leag*), from the beavers that then sported in the waters of the Hull. A little church was there, dedicated to the beloved disciple, the name-sake of the holy prelate who now gazed in rapture upon the scenery around him. This church he converted into a monastery, and when he felt the pressure of old age—718—he resigned his bishopric, and retired to Inderawood, to enjoy at the close of life its peaceful shades. There he died—721—and was buried in St. Peter's porch, within the Church that he loved so well, and from which he is called to this day, St. John of Beverley. In 1037 he was solemnly canonized at Rome, and in the same year Archbishop Alfric removed his bones, and deposited them in a precious shrine which was radiant with gold, and silver, and jewels.‡‡

In England, during many centuries, the name of John of Beverley was held in the greatest reverence, and the fame of his alleged miracles was very widely spread. The cry of St. John, nearly as frequently as that of St. George, particularly in the Scottish wars, gave courage to the soldier in the hour of battle.§§

In addition to the miracles performed by John himself, the Bollandists|||| have published four books of those which were wrought at his relics, written by eye witnesses of the same. William of Malmesbury has rather an amusing account of one, which he states to have existed even in his day, and was shown as a sight. "The people of the place used to bring bulls, the wildest and fiercest they could find. These unmanageable creatures were brought hampered with cords, and several strong men to drag them along, but, as soon as they entered the church yard in Beverley, they dropped their fierce and formidable nature, and were as tame as if they had been metamorphosed into sheep. The people were so well assured of their inoffensiveness, that they used to turn them loose and play with them."¶¶

The posthumous fame acquired by the two bishops—Wilfrid and John—in connection with the later histories of their respective shrines, will be referred to with some frequency

* Bede, iv., 3. The expression in the text "undoubtedly implies," to use the words of Mr. Skene, "that the territory of the Picts formed at this time a constituent part of Oswy's dominions."—*Celtic Scotland*, i., 260.

† *Fasti Ebor.*, 55-83; *Biog. Brit. Lit.*, i., 164-84; Poulson, *Beverlac*, 602.

‡ *Fasti Ebor.*, 79, *ut supra*. § *Ibid.*, 66. || Bede, iv., 12. ¶ *Fasti Ebor.*, 84.

** v., 2-6. †† *Fasti Ebor.*, 84. ‡‡ *Ibid.*, 88, 89; Bede, v., 2, 6; Poulson, *Beverlac*, *passim*.

§§ *Biog. Brit. Lit.*, i., 233. ||| *Acta S.S.*, ¶¶ *De Gestis Pontificum Angl.*

as we proceed, but I must now take up the thread of Northumbrian history from the death of Egfrid, A.D. 685.

This king was succeeded, but only as it would appear, in the province or realm of the Deiri, by Alfrid surnamed the Learned, 685-705—who had been trained in the school of Iona. He was the patron of the great literary movement, which, originating with Caedmon and Benedict Biscop, long outlasted the political importance of Northumbria.

During the eighth century Northumbria is only remembered as the home of Bede, Archbishops Egbert and Albert, Alcuin, and other great scholars.

At an earlier period, the principal seats of learning were in Kent, and the south of England, but the kingdom of Northumbria seems to have afforded a still more congenial situation. The school established by Egbert, (725-66), at York was soon famous through Christendom. From all parts of Europe youths of noble birth found their way to the seat of the northern primacy to be taught by the prince-bishop. Albert, his successor (766-82), travelled far and wide in search of books, returning to York with the treasures he had collected. By this prelate, Alcuin, the glory of his age, was raised to the office of *magister scholarum*, and had charge of the famous library, the contents of which in his well-known letter to Charlemagne, A.D. 796, he describes as the "Flowers of Britain." In one of his works, a metrical history of the church of York, he gives a more particular account of this library, which was deemed by William of Malmesbury not only of sufficient importance to be mentioned in his History, but to be styled, "omnium liberalium artium armariam nobilissimam bibliothecam." But though literature was at its height among our Saxon ancestors in the eighth century, by the tenth it had fallen into such decay, that Oswald Archbishop of York (972-92), was obliged to send to France for competent masters to place in the monasteries of his province. The greatest destruction of Anglo-Saxon books happened during the numerous inroads of the Danes, from the ninth to the eleventh century, when so many of the richest libraries were committed to the flames, along with the monasteries in which they were deposited.*

After 806, the chroniclers cease to give a regular succession of the Northumbrian kings. The supremacy of Egbert of Wessex was peacefully submitted to. Then came the incursions of the Danes, who, in 867, took possession of York, and by whose leader, Halfdene, in 875, Deira was partitioned among his followers.

It is singular and noteworthy, however, that while Deira was actually divided and occupied by the Danes—Bernicia, into whatever degree of subjection it may have been brought to the Danish power, still remained occupied by Englishmen, and under the immediate government of English rulers.†

Here an interesting point suggests itself, with regard to the birthplace of the Craft Legend that has come down to us. The probability is greater that the traditions of old Northumbria were longer preserved in English Bernicia than in Danish Deira, and in the same way, many oral legends of the "first Christian king of the Northumbers" may have survived in the former that were swept away in the latter.

Even at Edwinesburh, in the extreme north, the fame of its founder must have lingered in the popular memory, when most or all of the floating traditions with regard to him were submerged beneath the wave of Danish occupation, at York, in the south.

The events last related were followed by the Peace of Wedmore, A.D. 878, to which I have previously referred.‡ the result being that England became divided into Wessex, Mercia, and the *Danelagh*—the last named district comprising the country ceded to the Danes. I now pass to Athelstan, around whose name many legends have clustered, and among them the alleged grant of three charters, two in rhythmic and one in prose form, conveying in the former, some privileges of a cognate character to those traditionally conferred by the same monarch on the Masons.

But in order that the story I am about to relate, as well as the object with which it is brought into the narrative, may be more clearly understood, a word or two are essential with regard to the supremacy over the other Princes of Britain, achieved by Edward—the father of Athelstan—A.D. 922-24.

From 924, to the fourteenth century, the vassalage of Scotland was an essential part of the public law of the Isle of Britain. No doubt many attempts were made to cast off the dependent relation which had been voluntarily incurred; but when a king of the English

* Wharton, *Angl-Sacr.* ii., 201; Warton, i., 196, 208; Milner, 70; *Biog. Brit. Lit.*, i., 36, 107; *Fasti Ebor.*, 97, 98, 102.

† Freeman, i., 644; Robertson, ii., 430.

‡ *Ante*, 36, *q.v.*

had once been chosen "to father and to lord," his successors never willingly gave up the position which had thus been conferred upon them. Whenever the King of England is strong enough he always appears as the acknowledged feudal superior of the King of Scots.*

It must also be borne in mind that in the days of Edward and Athelstan, Lothian was still English (or Danish), an integral part of Bernicia, and that the kingdom of Strathclyde was not conquered and abolished until the time of Edmund—the brother and successor of Athelstan—A.D. 945.

The adventures of Athelstan, on his march against the Scots, have next to be recounted but at the very outset I may explain, that the most marvellous of them all was circumstantially related by Edward I., in a letter to Pope Boniface VIII., as declaratory of his right to the kingdom of Scotland.†

The dates as well as the order of events are conflicting, but a careful writer tells us—"The truth seems rather to be that Athelstan, when he came with his army to Ripon, on his expedition against the Scots, vowed, that if it should prove successful, he would endow the churches of York, Ripon, and Beverley, with profitable privileges; and that his Grant consisted in the creation and conveyance of peculiar and exempt legal jurisdiction, over those manorial and appurtenant lands already acquired by the see of York, and since comprehended in what is termed the franchise, or "Liberty of Ripon."‡

Two charters granted by Athelstan to the monastery of St. Wilfrid, were printed by Dugdale in his *Monasticon*, one in old English verse, and the other in Latin prose. § The following is the English charter, which is similar to that granted by the same monarch to the church at Beverley, and concedes the privilege of sanctuary, together with the ordeal of fire and water, freedom from tax or tribute, and other immunities.

CARTA ADELSTANI REGIS SANCTO
WILFRIDO DE RIPPON
CONCESSA||

Wyt all that es and es gan
þat ik King Adelstan
As gyuen als frelich as I may
And to þe capitell of Seint Wilfrai,
Of my free deuotion,
þair pees at Rippon
On ilke side þe kyrke a mile,
For all ill deeds and ylke agyle,
And wipin þair kirke yate
At þe stan þat Gripstole hate;
Wipin þe kirke dore and þe quare
þair haue pees for les and mare.
Ilkan of þes stedes sal haue pees
Of frodmortell and il deeds
þat þair don is, tol, tem,
With iren and with water deme;
And þat þe land of Seint Wilfrai
Of alkyn geld fro sal be ay.
At na man at langes me to
In þair Herpsac sal haue at do;
And for ik will at þa be saue
I will at þai alkyn freedom haue;
And in al þinges be als free
As hert may thynke or eygh may se,
At te power of a kinge
Masts make free any þynge.
And my seale haue I sett þerto,
For I will at na man it undo.

* Freeman, i. 58, *ut supra*. The legal and permanent dependence of Scotland upon England from 924 to 1328, is denied by Scottish writers. But the A.S. Chronicle—A.D. 924—plainly states that *the people of Scotland*, as well as the king, chose Edward as their lord, and therefore the only doubtful point seems to be, whether he became lord to each particular man? The clause in the "Old Charges" "to be liegeman to the King of England" is here worthy of our consideration, for though "Englaland," in its different forms does not appear in the Chronicles until the year 1014, the same idea as that underlying the Charge in the Manuscript Constitutions, viz.: the supremacy of an over lord, may have been passed down from mouth to mouth by song and recitation, from A.D. 924, or even from the Bretwaldadom of Edwin of Northumbria.

† Responsio ad literas Bonifacii VIII., Papæ antedictas, declaratoria de jure Regis Angliæ ad regnum Scotiæ.—Rymer, *Fœdera*, i., 932. ‡ Walbran, *Guide to Ripon*, 7.

§ These Charters are also referred to by Allen, *Hist. County of York*, iii., 365; in *Magna Britannia*, vi., 499; and by Sheahan and Whellan, *Hist. and Topog. of York*, ii., 174; iii., 21.

|| Kemble, *Cod. Dipl. Ævi Sax.* (1839-47), ii., 188, 189; Thorpe, *Dipl. Ang. Ævi Sax.* (1865), 182, 183, Dugdale, *Monast. Angl.* ii., 133.

Either before or after his visit to Ripon, King Athelstan is said to have gone to Beverley, where, at his request, he was conducted to the sepulchre of St. John. Prostrating himself before the relics of the holy man, he devoutly prayed for his protection and assistance, and drawing his dagger from its scabbard, he placed it on the high altar, as a pledge that, should he succeed in his undertaking, and return alive to claim it, he would shew honour to the church and increase its possessions. The "custodes ecclesiae," who witnessed this solemn vow, suggested to the king that he should take some token with him of having visited the sacred spot. Therefore he caused a standard to be taken from the Church—which was borne before him in his subsequent battles. He then pursued his march to York to join his army.

St. John seems to have had the king from this time under his protection, and, indeed, on the eve of battle, is said to have appeared to him in a vision, attired in a pontifical habit. The Saint charged Athelstan to pass the river which separated the two kingdoms, fearlessly with his army. This the king communicated to the troops, who highly inspirited thereby, crossed the river as they were commanded, and duly vanquished the opposing Scots.* After this, Athelstan ravaged the country, and when in the vicinity of Dunbar, "He praised unto God, that at the instance of St. John of Beverlaie, it would please him to grant that he might shew some open token, whereby it should appear to all them that then lived, or should hereafter succeed, *that the Scots ought to be subject unto the Kings of England*; herewith the king smote with his sword upon a great stone, standing near the Castle of Dunbar, and with the stroke there appeared a cleft in the same stone to the length of an elme,† which remainde to be shewed as a wisse of that thing manie years after."‡

Upon the return of Athelstan from Scotland, he again repaired to Beverley, and fully redeemed his pledge, by conferring many important privileges and possessions on the Church of St. John, among the former being the right of sanctuary, which it retained until the Reformation.

Of the numerous variations of the legend, the following will perhaps be found the most interesting. It is related that Godruff, the cellarer of the monastery, after Athelstan's vigil and departure, also set out on a journey to the north. The former, however, when the King returned to Beverley, avoided the royal presence, but one day they met accidentally. "Who art thou?" said the king. "I am," replied the cellarer, "a humble brother, who has been living in seclusion by reason of a vow." "Yet thy features are familiar to me," continued the king, "thou art marvellously like St. John, who appeared to me in vision on the eve of the battle." Godruff, though a little disconcerted, was soon cool enough to reply, "It may be so, my lord, for I am descended from the same family, and the likeness has previously been remarked."§

According to the historian of Beverley, it was on the occasion of his *first* expedition against the Scots, in 933, that Athelstan visited the shrine of St. John, and deposited his "cultellum" on the high altar; while it was on his *second* expedition, which terminated with the battle of Brunanburh—937—that he displayed, as it is said, the standard of the Saint.||

The privileges granted by Athelstan to the Church, were confirmed by Edward the Confessor,¶ and afterwards by William the Conqueror, the latter, it is said, having done so in consequence of a miracle wrought by St. John. Various were the struggles made by the English to throw off the yoke of the Normans, and the most prominent success was in Northumbria. Crowds of English, with Waltheof, son of the celebrated Siward, Edgar the Atheling, and others, united with the Danes, who, entering the Humber, were very cordially received. The news of the loss of York and of the slaughter of the three thousand Normans who formed its garrison, was speedily conveyed to William, and in an outburst of wrath the king swore, *by God's splendour*, his usual oath, that he would destroy all the people

* *Fœdera*, 1816, i. (pt. ii.), 771.

† Quatinus tam succedentes quam presentes cognoscere possent Scotos Anglorum Regno Jure Subjugari: et videns quosdam scopulos juxta quendam locum prope Dunbar, in Scotia, prominere; extracto gladio, dei virtute agente, ita cavatur, ut mensura ulnae longitudine possit coaptari, etc.—*Ibid.*, 932.

‡ Holinshed, *Chron.*, vi., 20. This miracle is quoted at length in the letter already cited from Edward I. to Pope Boniface VIII., and from which the preceding note is an extract.

§ Parkinson, *Yorkshire Legends and Traditions*, 84.

|| *Beverlac*, 35.

¶ This king, at the request of Archbishop Alfric (*ante* 25), allowed *three fairs* to be held at Beverley in each year, but the privilege seems to have been more than counterbalanced by a custom of the same prelate's institution. It was, "that the principal inhabitants of Beverley, and the more noble of those who dwelt nigh, should *thrice* in the year follow the relics of St. John, within and without the town, both fasting and barefooted."

of Northumbria. He spread his camps over the country for a space of a hundred miles and then the execution of his vow began. Alfred of Beverley, a monkish writer of the twelfth century, who was treasurer of the collegiate church of St. John, and resided there, states, "that the Conqueror destroyed men, women, and children, from York even to the Western sea, except those who fled to the Church of the glorious confessor, the most blessed John at Beverley, as the only asylum. When it was known that the king's army had pitched their tents within seven miles of Beverley, all the people of the district fled thither for protection, and brought their valuables with them. Certain soldiers for the purposes of plunder, entered the town, and not meeting with any resistance had the temerity to advance to the churchyard. Thurstinus, their captain, on seeing a venerable man sumptuously attired, with golden bracelets on his arms, moving towards the Church (to the astonishment of the people, who wondered what he could be doing on the *outside* of it), dashed after him, sword in hand, without the least respect to the place, rushing through the doors of the edifice, which he had scarcely entered before he became a corpse, falling from his horse with a broken neck, and his head turned towards his back, his feet and hands distorted like a misshapen monster. This was considered a miracle by all. The astonished and terrified companions of Thurstinus, throwing down their arms, humbly besought John to have mercy on them; then returning to the king, related the circumstances to him, who fearing a similar revenge upon the rest of his army, sent for the elders of the Church, and whatever liberty had been conferred by former kings and princes to the Church, he confirmed by his royal authority and seal. That he might not fall short of his predecessors in munificence, he decorated the Church with valuable presents, and increased its possessions; and to prevent his army from disturbing its peace, he commanded them to remove to a greater distance, and there pitch their tents."*

Thus were the demesne lands of St. John surrounded as it were with a magic ring, amid the most appalling scenes of cruelty, devastation, and blood. No less than one hundred thousand persons are stated by William of Malmesbury to have perished, and a district of sixty miles in length, which had been full of towns and cultivated fields, is said to have remained desolate even to his day.†

The fabulous appearance of St. John is merely related in order to show what was written—and doubtless believed—within less than a century after the safety of the minster had been ensured by his alleged miraculous interference.

But the devastation wrought by William, and the immunity enjoyed by Beverley, are well attested facts, and of this period it has been observed:—"The City of York, captured and re-captured, was in ashes; the minster with its treasure—its muniments, and the glorious library which had been the pride of Saxon England—all were surrendered to the flames. The archiepiscopal lands were wasted. Beverley was the only place in Yorkshire that escaped."‡

Athelstan's grant appears to have been confirmed by every king of England from Edward the Confessor to Edward IV., and by many of them the original grantor is referred to in the war chart. This occurs in one from Stephen, to whom—says Alfred of Beverley—St. John appeared in a vision and in another from Richard II., but the first king who quotes the words,

" Al's free make I theo,
As hert may think,
Or eyhe may see,"

as having been inserted in the first charter of all was Henry IV. They also appeared in a petition§ of the Commons to Henry V., in a charter from Henry VIII., and may still be seen on a tablet in Beverley minster under a portrait of King Athelstan.||

* Aluredi Beverlacensis *Annales* (Hearne) 129. See also, the statements of John of Brompton, and Henry Knighton of Leicester, *apud* Twysden, *X Scrip.* 966, 2345.

† *Beverlac*, 45. Hallam observes, "The whole country between the Tyne and the Humber was laid so desolate, that for nine years afterwards there was not an inhabited village, and hardly an inhabitant left; the wasting of this district having been followed by a famine, which swept away the whole population. The desolation continued in Malmesbury's time, sixty or seventy years afterwards."—*Middle Ages*, ii., 312.

‡ *Fasti Ebor.*, 146. The curious reader is further referred to the *X Scrip.*, *loc. cit.*; and Freeman, *iv.*, 289, 92.

§ The preamble of this instrument recites, "that King Athelstan promised if God should grant him success in his march, by giving him the victory over the Scots, he would endow the Churches of York, Beverley, and Ripon, with profitable liberties and franchises for ever."

|| Leland, *Collectanea*, ii., 364; *Beverlac*, 55, 102, 176, 530, 563; *Fasti Ebor.*, 91.

Stephen, John, Edward I., Edward II., Henry IV., and Henry V. each visited the shrine of St. John, while pilgrims in thousands, rich and poor, nobles and peasants, resorted unto it.

Twice, or more, Edward I. carried with him to Scotland the banner of the Saints as talisman in the wars.*

The victory of Agincourt was won on the 25th of October, the day on which the translation of the remains of the Saint was commemorated, and Henry V. attributed his success to the intercession of St. John.† At the same time the relics at Beverley were moved in sympathy, and we have it on the authority of Archbishop Chicheley, of Canterbury (1416), that during the engagement, 'holy oil flowed by drops like sweat out of his tomb.'‡

The victor of Agincourt shewed his gratitude by making a pilgrimage to the shrine with his Queen, in August, 1420.§

CARTA ADELSTANI REGIS
SANCTO JOHANNI BEVERLACI ||

þat witen alle þat euer been,
þat þis charter heren and seon,
þat I þe king Adelstan
Has yaten and giuen to seint Iohn
Of Beuerlike, þat sai I yow,
Tol and theam, þat wit ye now,
Sok and sake ouer al þat land
þat es giuen into his hand,
On euer ilke kinges dai,
Be it all free þan and ay;
Be it almousend, be all free
Wit ilke man and ecke wit meo.
þat wil i be him þat mo scop
Bot til an arcobiscop,
And til þe seouon minstre prestes
þat serues God þer saint Iohn rostes.
þat giue i God and seint Iohn
Her befor you euer ilkan.
All my herst corn ineldeoel¶
To uphald his minstre weell:
þa fourþreue be heuon kinge
Of ilka plough of estriding.
If it swa botid, or swa gaas,
þat ani man her again taas**
Be ho baron, be ho orle,
Clark, prest, parson, or cherele;
Na be he no þat ilk Gome
I will forsaye þat he come
(þat wit ye woel or and or)
Till saint Iohn mynstro dor;
And þar i will (swo Crist mo red)
þat ho bet his misded,
Or he be cursod son on on
Wit al þat soruis saint Iohn.
Yif it swa botid and swa es,
þat þe man in mansing es: ††
I sai yow ouer fourti daghes,
(Swilk‡‡ þan be sain Iohn laghes)
þat þe chapitel of Beuerlike
Til þe scirif of Euerwike
Send þair writ son onan,
þat þis mansodman §§ be tan.
þe scirref þan say i ye,
Witouten any writ ono me
Sal nimen him (swo Crist me red)

* *Beverlac*, 83; *Fasti Ebor.*, 380.

† *Fasti Ebor.*, 91. Gifts poured in to the shrino of St. John. Even so late as the fifteenth century its fame, and the fame of the saint, had by no means diminished. At the battle of Agincourt (A.D. 1415) St. John was said to have appeared in the ranks of the English army, sitting on a white horse, and to have encouraged the men with many gracious words.—*Yorkshire Legends and Traditions*, 85.

‡ In a letter to the Bishop of London, requesting that in consequence of the great victory, the day of St. John's burial, *i.e.*, the 7th of May, should be observed with due state and coremony.—*Beverlac*, app. vii.; *Fasti Ebor.*, 91; Sir Harris Nicholas, *Battle of Agincourt*, 176. § *Beverlac*, 191.

¶ *Dugdalo*, ii., 129; *Kemble*, ii., 186; *Thorpe*, 180. The charter will also be found in *Lansdowne MS.*, 269—the copy thore given, being, as I am informed by Mr. J. Compton Price, in the handwriting of John Withie, a horald painter, and of approximate date, A.D. 1619.

¶‡ hest corne and moldrel. ** sacs. †† that the mansings is. ‡‡ whilko. §§ his manserman.

And into my prison ledo,
 And hald him (þat is my wilt)
 Til ho bot his misgilt.
 If men roises newe laghes
 In any oþer kinges daghos,
 Be þay fromed, be þay yomed
 Wit yham of the mynstre domed,
 þe mercy of yo misdeed,
 Gif i saint Iohn, swo Crist me rod,
 Yif man be cald of limes or lif
 Or mon chalenges land in strif
 Wit my bodlaik,* wit writ of right,
 Y wil saint Iohn haue yo might.
 þat man þar for noght fight in fæld,
 Nowþor wit staf no wit shoold :
 Bot twelue men wil i þat it tolle
 Swa sal it be swo heer ibelle.†
 And ho þat him swo werno may
 Ouercomen be he euer and ay.
 Als ho in feld war ouercomen,
 þe crauantise of him be nomen.
 þat yati‡ God and saint Iohn
 Her befor iow and euer ilkon.
 If man be founden slan idrunkend.§
 Sterued on saint Iohn rito,|| his aghen men,
 Wiþouten swike his aghon bailiffs make ye sight,
 Nan ower coroner haue þe might :
 Swa mikel fredom giue i ye,
 Swa hert may think or eghe see.
 þat haue i þought and forbiseen,
 I will þat þer euer been.
 Samening and mynstre lif
 Last follike¶ witouten strif,
 God help alle þas ilk men
 þat helpes to þe þowen. Amen.

The privileges granted by this charter are :

Tol, theam, sok, sake
 A writ de excommunicando capiendo
 Judgment of life and member
 A writ of right,
 To hold the office of Coroner,
 The right of Sanctuary,

Also the gift of Hestrafra, or herst corn ; that is, of all the provender which was yearly payable to King Athelstan for his horses throughout the East Riding, being four thraves of corn for every ploughland throughout the district. Independently of the gift of herst corn, King Athelstan gave to the CHURCHES** the lordship of Beverley, as well as lands in Brandsburton and Lockington.††

It was an appendage to many grants of land, that the possessors should have the soc, sac, toll, team, and infangthef. These words generally went together in the description of such privileges, and signify the holding of a court to which all freemen of the territory should repair of deciding pleas therein, as well as of imposing ameracements according to law, of taking tolls upon the sale of goods, and of punishing capitally a thief taken in the fact within the limits of the Manr ††

A commentator upon the preceding charter, observes :—" The Saxon language was in use until after the reign of Stephen, when the Saxon Chronicle was composed, in which the deeds of Athelstan are recorded very fully. The union of the Norman and Saxon languages

* god lake. † swa here well.

‡ hat. § founden dronken.

|| St. Johns rike.

¶ for euer.

**The privileges subsequently enjoyed by the burgesses of Beverley are stated, very incorrectly, to have been granted to them by King Athelstan, (*ante* 3)—whereas the germ whence these immunities sprang, which afterwards flourished so luxuriantly, was a charter obtained from Archbishop Thurstan, A.D. 1114—40. †† *Beverlac*, 39, 40.

‡‡Hallam, *Middle Ages*, ii., 299. In an alleged charter granted—A.D. 948—by Edred to the monastery of Croyland, the following occurs :—" Quare uolo quod dicti monachi haboant ista praedia de donatione et confirmatione mea, libera et soluta ab omni causa et onore saeculari, et omnes libertates et liberis consuetudines, cum omni illo quod appellatur *socha*, *sacha*, *tol* et *tem*, *infangthef*, *woif* et *stray*, et cum hiis legitime appendentibus, in puram et perpetuam elemosinam meam." Kemble, *Cod. Dipl. Ævi Sax.* ii., 283.

appears, both from interna evidence and political history, to have been complete about 1216. The language of the Beverley charter seems somewhat more modern than that of Layamon's translation of Wace's *Brit* [*Brut*] and more accordant with that of Robert of Gloucester, who flourished about 1280. Perhaps a conjecture may be safely hazarded, that the charter in its present form is a production of the reign of Edward I., about the year 1300. That king's visits to Beverley, and his taking the standard of St. John with him to Scotland, would naturally revive the remembrance of Athelstan's expedition, which is accordingly copiously alluded to by Walsingham and other chroniclers. At p. 97, v. i., of Warton's *History of Poetry*, is a fragment on Athelstan, which is attributed to this very period. Nothing therefore is more probable, than that the memory of Athelstan's Scottish invasion should recall that of his grants to Beverley, and lead the monks to *recast them in verse*, according to the custom of the age. A rhyming grant to the ancestor of the Rawdon family is given in Collins's *Peerage*; and a rhyming charter (ascribed to *Edward the Confessor*) to Ralph Peperking, or Peverel, beginning 'Iche Edward koming' is said to be among the records in the exchequer of Hilary term, 17, Edw. II. (see Camden's *Brit. Essex*). Yorkshire at this period was not deficient in men capable of producing better poetry than was here required. Robert de Brunne, of Malton, who was connected with the lords of Cottingham, who were also lords of Brunne; Robert Baston, the Carmelite friar of Scarbro'; Peter de Langtoft, an Augustine monk of Bridlington; and Richard Rolle, the hermit of Hempole, all flourished about this time." *

As to the value of doubtful or spurious charters, some remarks of Mr. Freeman are so much in point, that I shall here introduce them—"A forger will naturally reproduce whatever he thinks most characteristic of the class of documents which he is imitating. The spurious documents are, in this way, evidence just as much as the genuine ones; they continue the tradition of the genuine ones. The doubtful and spurious charters have therefore a certain value; their formulæ are part of the case, and I have not scrupled to add them to my list." †

Of the Anglo-Saxon Charters, Sir Francis Palgrave says, "Successive copyists modernized the language, and reduced the pure Anglo-Saxon of Ethelred to the Anglo-Norman or English of the Plantagenets." ‡

Of the grant, by Athelstan, to the Church of Beverley, of a charter *in some form*, there can hardly be a doubt, and among the instruments described by antiquaries as having been inventoried at one time as belonging to the collegiate or municipal archives of that town are,

"The Charter of King Athelstan of the immunity, liberty, and sanctuary of the lands of St. John, writ in Saxon."

"The Charter of privelege given to the King Athelstano by St John of Beverley, [*italics mine*] A.D. 925." §

The leuga, or privileged circuit of St. John, included the *town* of Beverley within its bounds. The privilege of sanctuary was connected with the *Church*, in which the *frid stool* was placed, but the refugees, called grithmen, were *domiciliated within the town*, and had the oath administered to them by the secular officer of the Archbishop. This official was directed to inquire of each refugee:—

"What man he killed, and whor with, and both ther names: and then gar hym lay his hand vppon the book, saying in this wyse,

Sir tak hode on your oth. Ye shalbo trow and foythful to my lord Archbishop of York, lord off this towne, to the provost of thesame, to the chanons of this chirch, and all othir miuistr's therooif.

Also ye shall bere no poynted wapen, dagger, knyfe, no nono other wapen agenst the Kyngs poce.

Also ye shalbe redy at all your power if thor be any debate or stryf or sothan case of fyre within the town to help to s'cess it.

Also ye shall be redy at the obite|| of King Adolstan, at the dirige and the messe at such tyme as it is done at the warnyng of the bolman of the town, and do your dewte in ryngyng, and for to offer at the mosse on the morne, so help you God and thies holy evangelists. And then gar hym kysse the book."

The various crimes and circumstances of those who resorted to the Sanctuary, were duly recorded, and of these entries the following is a specimen:—

* *Beverlac*, 40, 41.

† *Norman Conquest*, i., 554.

‡ *English Commonwealth*, ii., 9.

§ Loland, *Collectanea* vi., 43; *Beverlac*, *app.* i. The documents are also referred to in the *Monasticon*.

|| In religious houses they had a register or calendar, wherein they entered the obits or obituary days of their founders or benefactors, which was thence called the obituary. At Beverley besides the solemn observance of their patron saint's day, and the splendid exequies of King Athelstan, there were obits kept for King Edward III., Queen Phillipa, and many other persons.

"On the 20th day of August in the 25th year of King Henry VIII., Henry Shopman late of London pinner came to the liberty and sanctuary of St. John of Beverley for felony and other causes touching the safety of his body and the deprivation of his members and is admitted and sworn."*

These grithmen were often pardoned on condition of their serving in the king's army. In the 31st Edward I., the sanctuary-men at Beverley and many thousands of thieves and out-laws were allowed to enlist. The same practice continued under Edward III., by which king, A.D. 1334, a number of malefactors, who had joined him, were permitted to return home. John le Yong of Beverley, and twenty-two other homicides and robbers, as they are termed, had a similar license accorded to them.†

Returning to the narrative, there are statements that in the same expedition, Athelstan also invoked the protection of St. Cuthbert, but this version of the story presents no features which are of interest in the inquiry we are upon.

The next scene, therefore, will be laid at York, at which city, until the dissolution of these associations, there was an hospital called St. Leonard's, the chartulary of which, a beautifully written volume, engrossed in the reign of Henry V., passed into the Cotton collection, where it is now preserved in that section of the British Museum Library. From this book Dugdale has printed in his *Monasticon* an abstract, which furnishes the following particulars:—

When Athelstan was on his march against the Scots, he halted at York—A.D. 936‡—and there besought of the ministers of St. Peter's Church, who were then called *Colidei*, to offer up their prayers on behalf of himself and his expedition, promising them that, if he returned victorious, he would confer suitable honour upon the church and its ministers. Accordingly, after a successful campaign, he revisited this church, and observing that the *Colidei*, who maintained a number of poor people, had but little whereon to live, he granted to them and their successors for ever, a thrave of corn from every ploughland in the diocese of York—a donation which continued to be enjoyed until a late period under the name of Petercorn.

The record goes on to state, that these *Colidei* continued to receive fresh accessions to their endowments, and especially from Thomas, whom William the Conqueror advanced to the see of York in 1070. The *Colidei* soon after erected or founded in the same city, on a site which had belonged to the crown, an hospital or halting place for the poor who flocked thither, to which were transferred the endowments that the said *Colidei* or clerics had hitherto received. William Rufus removed the hospital to another part of the city, and king Stephen, when further augmenting its resources, changed its name from St. Peter's to St. Leonard's hospital. It contained a master or warden and 13 brethren, 4 secular priests, 8 sisters, 30 choristers, 2 school-masters, 206 beadsmen, and 6 servitors.§ I find a confirmation of its privileges, in the Statute-book, so late as 1423.||

It would appear that these *Colidei* were the officiating clergy of the Cathedral of St. Peter's at York in 936, and that they discharged the double function of divine service and eleemosynary entertainment; thus combining the two leading characteristics of the old conventual system which was common to the Irish and Benedictine rules. But when things assumed a new complexion, and a Norman Archbishop was appointed, the *Colidei*, or old order of officiating clergy, were superseded, and were removed to another quarter of the city, whither they took their endowments with them, and thus continued through several centuries, under an altered economy and title, till all memory of their origin had perished, save what was recorded in the preamble of their charter-book.¶

The facts then are, that the Cathedral of St. Peter's at York was begun under Edwin in 627, and the officiating clergy of the same edifice were granted a charter by Athelstan about the year 936. Here at all events two leading incidents in the Legend of the Craft coalesce in a common centre—York Minster—which Edwin founded, and whose ministers Athelstan endowed.

* In the Latin entries the concluding words generally are "et admissus est ac juratus."

† Landsdowne MS. 4292; *Sanctuar Dunelm. et Beverlac.* (Surtees Soc. v., 97 *et seqq.*); Poulson, 100, 107, 248, 611, 664; *Fasti Ebor.*, 358.

‡ In a previous work, and as a footnote to the story which is being related in the text, I observed:—"It is highly probable that the legend which connects English Masonry with a charter granted by Athelstan at York, A.D. 926, has been derived from the incident narrated above. The form of the legend, as given by Dr. Anderson in the Constitutions of 1723 varies slightly from that in the edition of 1738. In the former, he places the date of the occurrence at about 930; in the latter, at 926. In the former he styles the congregation at York a General Lodge; in the latter a Grand Lodge."—*Hist.*, i., 52.

§ Cotton MS. Nero D. iv.; Dugdale, *Monasticon Angl.*, (1846) vi., pt. ii., 607; Drake, *Eboracum*, 232.

|| 2 Hen. vi. c. ii.

¶ Reeves, *The Culdees of the British Islands*, 59, 60.

Before, however, commencing to sum up the evidence, it is incumbent upon me to lay the whole of it before the reader, and this, after a parting glance at the Colidei, I shall proceed to do, by resuming and concluding my sketch of the early history of Northumbria.

Mr. Robertson observes :—" It is worthy of notice that a *Hospital* is generally to be found where Culdees can be traced to have existed, and this hospital is generally dedicated to St. Leonard.

"A prior and twelve Culdees constituted the College of Kilrimont, better known under the subsequent name of St. Andrews. Upon seven of the community devolved the duty of ministrations at the altar. The altar-offerings were divided into seven portions ; one for the bishop, another for the hospital—that invariable appendage of a Culdee monastery ; while the remaining five became the property of the five Culdees, who never officiated at the altar, on the condition of entertaining all pilgrims and strangers when the hospital (which contained six) was full ; and upon such occasions the host was decided upon by lot."*

It is not a little remarkable that the part of old Northumberland which is quite away from the Humber has kept the name of Northumberland to this day. This resulted from the policy of the Danes, who conquered and occupied Yorkshire (or Deira), but allowed Egbert, an Anglo-Saxon, to assume the crown of the country beyond the Tyne (or Bernicia), and to direct the executive machinery under their paramount authority. Thus, while Yorkshire was parcelled out amongst the invaders, and adopted as their home, modern Northumberland was left in a great measure in the hands of its Anglo-Saxon inhabitants, who were even permitted to live under rulers of their own race, in subordination to the Danish kings.† Egbert was succeeded in his government by other Anglian rulers, but in the southern district of old Northumbria there seems to have been much disorder. According to Henry of Huntington, " the Danes reigned in a confused manner, sometimes there was a single king, at others two, sometimes even more."

Among those who submitted to Edward the Elder, A.D. 924, were Regnold, the Danish king, at York, Constantine of Scotland, Ealdred of Bamburgh, and the king of Strathclyde.

Ealdred of Bamburgh was the son of Athulf, or Eadulf, who is described by a chronicler as duke of Bamburgh. These princes were the successors of those Anglo-Saxon kings who ruled the country beyond the Tyne in subordination to the Danes, during the reigns of Ingwar, Halfdene, and Guthred.‡

In the second year of Athelstan—A.D. 926—all the vassal kings, together with Ealdred—styled by Mr. Freeman " a solitary Northumbrian chief who still sustained some sort of dependent royalty"—renewed their homage.§

Athelstan was succeeded in his empire by his two younger brothers, Edmund and Edred. The former, who conquered and abolished the kingdom of Strathclyde, granted the greater portion of it—including Cumberland, Galloway and other districts—to Malcolm, the Scottish king, as a fief ; the latter finally subdued Northumbria, A.D. 954, and the last phantom of Bernician royalty vanished.

At this period, Osulf, the son of Ealdred, was the Earl (duke, or king) of Bamburgh, and as a reward for relinquishing his petty sovereignty, received the Earldom of Yorkshire, his government being thus extended over all that remained of the ancient kingdom of Northumbria. Henceforth, the northern Earldom, of which Bamburgh was the capital, and to which the name of Northumberland was afterwards limited, appears to have descended to his family, as he himself enjoyed it, by inheritance ; while the government of Yorkshire was bestowed at pleasure by the Saxon and Danish monarchs of England. He was himself deprived of the latter before his death, by Edgar, the nephew and successor of Edred, who again divided the old kingdoms of Bernicia and Deira, allowing the northern province to remain under the rule of Osulf, but granting the southern one to Oslac.||

According to John of Wallingford, Kenneth, king of Scots, accompanied by these two Northumbrian Earls, went to London, where, with the consent of his Witan, Edgar granted to him the province of Lothian. Kenneth did homage for the fief, and promised that the ancient laws and customs of the country should be preserved and the English language retained, an engagement which was strictly carried out.*||

* *Scotland under her Early Kings*, i. 333, 338. † Hinde, *History of Northumberland*, 120, 158.

‡ *Ibid.*, 140. § *Norman Conquest*, i., 59. || Hinde, 159.

*|| Sub cautione multâ promittens quod populo partis illius antiquas consuetudines non negaret, et sub nomino et linguâ Anglicanâ permanerent. Quod usque hodie firmum manet.—*Chron. Joh. of Wallingford*, *op. Gale*, ii., 545.

That the conditions, mentioned by John of Wallingford—the retention of the laws and language of Lothian—were strictly observed, is proved by the whole later history. The laws and language of Lothian became the laws and language of the historic Scotland.*

As we shall presently see, the cession of Lothian has been ascribed to a later date, but of the fact that this district from the time of Edwin the Bretwalda, and long after, was politically as well as ethnologically English, there exists no doubt whatever.

Oslac, the Earl of Yorkshire (or Deira) was banished A.D. 975, and in the same year we find Eadulf† (or Waltheof†) seated at Bamburgh, as the successor of his father Osulf in the northern Earldom.

Towards the close of his career—A.D. 1006—Bernicia was invaded by the Scots, and the lord of Bamburgh, afraid of meeting them in the field, shut himself up in his castle. But his place was taken by his son Uhtred, who levied an army, rescued Durham, and gained a signal victory over the Scots. For this he received his father's Earldom, and that of Yorkshire also.‡ Uhtred's second wife was the daughter of a rich citizen, whose bitter enemy, Thurbrand, he promised to kill; which, unfortunately, for himself, he failed to do, and on the marriage being set aside, became the son-in-law of king Ethelred.¶

In 1013, Northumberland under Uhtred, submitted to Canute, but now the influence of the old feud made itself felt. Thurbrand, whom he had before engaged and omitted to kill, was now allowed to kill him. England was divided by Canute into four great governments, and that of Northumberland he bestowed on his brother-in-law, Eric, a Dane.

It is stated that the authority of Eric did not extend to Bernicia, but it seems probable that Eadulf Cudel, the brother of Uhtred, was allowed to hold the northern division of the Earldom under the supremacy of the Dane, and that he succeeded to the whole when Eric was banished some years later.¶

In 1018 there was another Scottish invasion. Malcolm II. entered England, and a great battle took place at Carham on the Tweed, in which the Scots gained a decisive victory over the whole force of the Bernician Earldom.

According to one theory, the annexation of Lothian to the Scottish kingdom was the result of this battle, but the whole matter has been made the subject of a separate study by Mr. Freeman, from which the following is an extract:—"The question with regard to Lothian is simply this. Was the cession of that part of Northumberland to the Scottish crown a grant from Edgar to his faithful vassal Kenneth? Or was the district wrung by Malcolm from the fears of Eadwulf Cudel, or won by force of arms after the battle of Carham in 1018? The simplest explanation is to suppose that Lothian was recovered by the English after the great victory of Uhtred in 1006; that it was occupied again by the Scots after their victory at Carham, and that then the cowardly Eadwulf relinquished all claim to it."**

It is strange, no doubt, that a monarch like Canute should have acquiesced in the cession of any portion of his dominions, but with regard to this part of his reign there is much obscurity, and all we know with certainty is, that in 1031, if not before, "he set matters straight." In that year, not only Malcolm II., but also Jehmarc and Macbeth—two other Scottish chiefs—became the "men" of the king of all England.††

Eadulf Cudel did not long survive the defeat of his forces at Carham, and was succeeded, but in the Bernician Earldom only, by his nephew Ealdred, the son of Uhtred. The new Earl straightway put to death Thurbrand, the murderer of his father, and was himself slain in turn about the year 1038, by Carl, the son of his victim.

Ealdred was succeeded by his half-brother Eadulf, who held the Bernician Earldom for three years, during which time he seems to have maintained, like his two immediate predecessors, a precarious independence, unrecognized, but unmolested, by the Anglo-Danish kings.‡‡

At this period, the southern Earldom was in the possession of the famous Siward, a Dane, whose gigantic stature, vast strength, and personal prowess, made him a favourite hero of romance. His wife was a daughter of Earl Ealdred, and in her right he may have laid a claim to the Bernician Earldom. But however this may be, in the same way that Canute permitted or incited the slaughter of Uhtred at the hands of Thurbrand, so Hardicanute permitted or incited the slaughter of Eadulf at the hands of Siward, the husband of his niece.§§

* Freeman, i., 578, *ut supra*. † Hinde, 159. ‡ Freeman, i., 645. § Hinde, 159.

¶ Freeman, i., 326, 327. ¶ Hinde, 162; Freeman, i., 377; Robertson, ii., 442.

** *Norman Conquest*, i., 573-79. †† *Ibid*, 447, 578; *A. S. Chron., sub. anno*. ‡‡ Hinde, 164.

§§ Freeman, i., 521.

The murderer then obtained—A.D. 1041—the whole Earldom of Northumberland, which he held until his death, A.D. 1055, when it was given by Edward the Confessor to his brother-in-law, Tostig, not only to the prejudice of Waltheof, the son of Siward, but of the numerous male descendants of the ancient lords of Bamburgh.*

Ten years later—A.D. 1065—the chief men of both divisions of Northumberland, rose in revolt. A Gemôt was held, at which Tostig was deposed, and Morkar, a Mercian elected in his place.†

Morkar kept Deira, or as it was beginning to be called, Yorkshire, in his own hands. But the government of the northern province, the old Bernicia (but without Lothian), now beginning to be distinctly called Northumberland, he entrusted to Osulf, the young son of Eadulf, the predecessor of Siward.‡

The proceedings of the Northumbrians were approved at a Gemôt, held at Oxford, October 20th, 1065.

William the Conqueror entrusted the government of Northumberland to Copsi, the former representative of Tostig, but the new Earl was slain by Osulf, who was himself killed shortly afterwards. The Earldom was then sold by William to Gospatric, but the newly-appointed Earl, together with Edgar the Atheling, and as we learn from Ordericus Vitalis, "all the best men of Northumberland" soon sought a refuge in Scotland.

The Earldom was next given—1069—to Robert de Comines, or Comyn, a Norman, the founder of a family afterwards renowned in Scottish history, who, however, was slain at Durham on proceeding to take up his government, and in the same year Edgar the Atheling, Waltheof, Gospatric, and many other leading men proceeded to York, where Danes and Saxons united in arms against the yoke of the Conqueror.

The rebellion was put down with a ruthless hand,§ and in 1072, at Abernethy, Malcolm III. became "the man" of the Conqueror. As the elder Malcolm had bowed to Canute, so the younger Malcolm bowed to William.||

In the same year William forgave Waltheof—son of Siward, by the daughter of Earl Ealdred—who now succeeded to the Earldoms of Yorkshire and Northumberland, to which he was entitled both through his father and mother.

Waltheof retained his honours for less than three years, during which period he found an opportunity of putting to death two sons of Carl, the murderer of his grandfather Ealdred, and was himself executed on a charge of conspiracy in 1075.

As it has been finely expressed, "the Englishman highest in birth and rank, the one remaining Earl of the blood of the conquered, was to die, and, as the conquered deemed, the martyr of his country."¶ The lamentations of the English over the grave of the last great noble of their nation were loud and universal.**

Waltheof left a daughter, Matilda, who was married, in the first instance, to Simon de Senlis, and secondly, A.D. 1108, to David—afterwards king of Scotland—who obtained in her right the Earldom of Northampton, and the Honour of Huntingdon.†† It is not quite clear whether the manor of Huntingdon was a portion of Earl Waltheof's estates assigned to David, or was given to him as a compensation for Northumberland.‡‡ The old Saxon Earldom was eventually restored in the person of Prince Henry, the son of David and Matilda—1139—by king Stephen. This took place in the year following that of the Battle of the Standard, to which attention will again be directed.

We have now seen Northumbria as a separate state or earldom, one of the centres of Saxon, and subsequently of Scandinavian power in Britain. We have also seen it divided into two lesser Earldoms, which have often been re-united under a common head, and as often become again dissevered.

The aggregation of smaller states that has making two powerful kingdoms, one on either side of Bernicia, could not fail to press it into the service of one or the other, or of both. The shadowy place it retained as a still undivided territory, was as a province (and Earldom) held by the king of Scots by tenure from the king of England.§§

The chroniclers, Florence, William of Malmesbury, and Simeon of Durham in his main history, are all silent as to any transfer of Lothian from English to Scottish dominion. Yet nothing is more certain than that Lothian was at one time English and that at a later time it became Scottish. The only question is as to the date of the change. |||

* Hinde, 166.

† *A. S. Chron.*

‡ Freeman, ii., 487.

§ *Ante*, 45, 46.

|| Freeman, ii., 517.

¶ *Ibid*, 594.

** Hume observes, "The English, who considered this nobleman as the last resource of their nation, grievously lamented his fate, and fancied that miracles were wrought by his reliques, as a testimony of his innocence and sanctity."—*Hist. of Eng.*, i., 266.

†† Skene, i., 455.

‡‡ Burton, *History of Scotland*, i., 427.

§§ *Ibid*, 369.

||| Freeman, i., 573, *ut supra*.

We are told by the Pictish Chronicle that during the reign of Indulf 954-62, Duneden, or Edinburgh, was evacuated by the English, and surrendered to the Scots.*

The conclusions of modern historians with regard to the period at which the rest of Lothian passed into the possession of the Scots are somewhat conflicting. Thus, the story told by John of Wallingford, of the cession of Lothian by King Edgar to Kenneth,† is accepted by Mr. Freeman but rejected by Mr. Skene. But whether the territory was granted peacefully by Edgar, or wrested by force of arms from Eadulf Cudel, is immaterial. We know, as a fact, that prior to the battle of Carham, in 1018,‡ the Scottish Chronicles include this part of modern Scotland in the general name of Saxonia, while afterwards it is described as Lao-donia, or Lothian.§

But though our leading authorities are at variance respecting the date of the cession, there is substantial agreement between them with regard to the consequences that followed in its train. Mr. Freeman observes: "A part of the Kingdom which was governed by a foreign sovereign, on whatever terms of dependence, could not long remain in the position of a province governed by an ordinary Earl. That the possession of Lothian would under all ordinary circumstances remain hereditary, must have been looked for from the beginning. This alone would distinguish Lothian from all other Earldoms."

"It was then to be expected that Lothian, when once granted to the king of Scots, should gradually be merged in the kingdom of Scotland. But it could not have been foreseen that this purely English or Danish province would become the historical Scotland. The different tenures of Scotland and Lothian got confounded; the kings of the Scots, from the end of the eleventh century, became English in manners and language. They retained their ancient title of kings of Scots, but they became in truth kings of English Lothian and of Anglicized Fife."||

The same writer tells us:—"In the eleventh century at least, if not in the tenth, the king of Scots stood to his English over-lord in a three-fold relation, grounded on three distinct acts, which are popularly confounded. These were: First, the commendation of the king and people of the Scots to Edward the Elder in 924. Secondly, the grant of Cumberland by Edmund to Malcolm in 945. Thirdly, the grant of Lothian to the Scottish kings, either under Edgar or under Canute.

At the time of the Commendation, the country which is now called Scotland, was divided among three quite distinct sovereignties. North of the Forth and Clyde the king of Scots reigned over a Celtic people, but south of the two great friths the Scottish name and dominion were unknown.

By Cumberland (in 945), must be understood, not only the present English county, but all northern Strathclyde, or modern Cumberland, with a considerable portion of modern Scotland.

The south-west part of modern Scotland formed part of the kingdom of the Strathclyde Welsh. The south-east part of modern Scotland—Lothian—was purely English or Danish, as in language it remains to this day. It was a part of Northumberland, and had its share in all the revolutions of that kingdom.

The relations in which Scotland, Cumberland, and Lothian stood to England, were as follows:—Scotland was a vassal state, Cumberland a fief held without, and Lothian a fief held within, the kingdom of England.

These distinctions it is essential to bear in mind, because by the time of the great controversy of the thirteenth century, that Scotland, Strathclyde, and Lothian were originally all dependencies of England, but held in three different degrees of dependence, had passed out of mind on both sides."¶

The general narrative left off at the execution of Earl Waltheof by order of William the Conqueror. At the period of the Norman invasion, and down to A.D. 1093, Malcolm III., surnamed Canmore, or great head, was king of the Scots.

The form in which the influence of the Conquest was first felt in Scotland was by a steady migration of the Saxon people northward. They found in Scotland people of their own race, and made a marked addition to the predominance of the Saxon or Teutonic element. About the year 1068 there came among these emigrants a group whose flight from England, and reception by Malcolm, make a turning point in history. Edgar the Atheling, the heir of the Saxon line of kings, came over, bringing with him his mother and his two sisters, and such a body of retainers as an exiled court might command.** One of

* Skene, i., 365. † *Ante*, 51. ‡ *Ante*, 52. § Skene, *Chronicles of the Picts and Scots*, lxxix.
 || *Norman Conquest*, i., 126-28. ¶ Freeman, i., 123-25, 127. ** Burton, i., 373.

the sisters, Margaret, was afterwards married to Malcolm, and from the time of this king English became the language of the Scottish court.

As already related, Malcolm submitted to the Conqueror in 1072, and this homage he renewed to his son and successor in 1091. By his treaty with William Rufus, the southern portion of the ancient kingdom of Strathclyde, or Cumbria, now forming the modern county of Cumberland, but which for many years afterwards was only known by the name of its capital Carloli, or Carlisle, seems to have been surrendered by Malcolm to the king of England, who took possession of it in the following year.*

It is contended by Scottish writers, that the homage done by Malcolm was rendered for Lothian, as being an integral part of England, and for Strathclyde or Cumbria, but not for the kingdom of Scotland.

With the wider contention I am unconcerned, as the only point I am seeking to establish—by occasional references to the doctrine and practice of Commendation—is, that the claims of the king of England, as over-lord, were repeatedly acknowledged throughout the entire realm of Old Bernicia.

At Malcolm's death, in 1093, Lothian had become a very important and influential dependency of the Scottish kingdom, and its Saxon population must have looked with longing eyes to the children of their revered Queen Margaret as their natural lords. This is clear from the Saxon Chronicle, which, in recording the death of Edward, the eldest son of Malcolm, by Queen Margaret, who was slain with his father in 1093, adds, "who should, if he had lived, have been king after him," though there was in existence at that time an older prince, Duncan, the offspring of the king's first marriage.†

The Anglicizing of Scotland went on vigorously under Malcolm's sons, all of whom, but notably David I., inherited the piety and civilizing instincts of their mother, St. Margaret. David accompanied his sister, the wife of Henry I., to the English Court, where he was brought up. By his brother-in-law he was created Earl of Northampton, on his marriage with the daughter and heiress of Waltheof, the last English Earl of Yorkshire and Northumberland, and the death of his brother Edgar placed him in possession of the principality of Strathclyde, having been detached by a bequest of that king from the rest of the Scottish kingdom. On the death of Alexander I., the next king of the Scots, another son of Malcolm Canmore, in 1124, David succeeded him, and as the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle tells us "held at the same time both the kingdom of Scotland and the English Earldom."

In 1138 David invaded Yorkshire in order to support the title of his niece, the Empress Matilda, to the crown of England, and the Barons who were supporters of Stephen's cause in that part of the kingdom, assembled an army and encamped at Northallerton, where a battle took place. Thurstan, archbishop of York, the king's lieutenant in the north was prevented by illness from accompanying the army further than Thirsk. He therefore commissioned Ralph, bishop of Orkney,‡ to fill his place, who, standing on an eminence in the centre of the army, absolved (in the name of the archbishop), all those who might be killed in the approaching action.

This engagement has ever since been called the Battle of the Standard, from a long pole,

"Like the mast of some tall ammiral,"

which Thurstan brought from the convent of Beverley.

This was drawn on a four-wheeled carriage, and had on the top of it a silver crucifix, under which were suspended the banners of St. Peter of York, St. John of Beverley, and St. Wilfrid of Ripon, and above all, in a silver pyx, the consecrated host.§

We may well suppose that the unfurling of these consecrated banners must have awakened some echoes of King Athelstan's famous march against the Scots, if, indeed, a sense of gratitude for his endowments, did not directly prompt the custodians of the several ensigns, to send them out wherever danger threatened, and as talismans to the wars. The Scots forces were routed, and in the following year, Henry, the eldest son of David of Scotland, was created by Stephen, Earl of Northumberland, that is of the land between the Tweed and the Tyne, and received also from his father the immediate possession of Carlisle and Northumberland.||

* Hinde, 195.

† Skene, i., 435.

‡ Mr. Ingledew observes:—"Both the MSS. which I have consulted concur with Savile's printed text—[*Angl. Rerum Script. Post Bedam*—in the reading of 'Oreadum,' but Roger of Wendover and other historians say 'Ralph, bishop of Durham'."—*History and Antiquities of Northallerton*, 19.

§ Ailred of Rievaulx, *apud Twysdon*, 338-46; Ingledew, 21-23.

|| Freeman, v., 260.

David I., like all the children of St. Margaret, was devoted to the Church. He began the establishment of the bishopric of Glasgow while he was yet Prince of Strathclyde. In his reign were founded or enlarged the bishoprics of Dunkeld, Moray, Aberdeen, Ross, Caithness, Brechin, Dunblane, and Galloway, and to the same time also belong the religious houses of Holyrood in Edinburgh, Melrose, Jedburgh, Kelso, Dryburgh, Newbattle in Lothian, and Kinloss in Moray.*

In Scotland the old Celtic style, with its small oratories in place of churches, and its round towers, prevailed until the reign of David, who introduced the Norman style and the Catholic discipline and organization.

It has been alleged that workmen were imported from Strasburg by this king, in order to build Holyrood Abbey, and upon this story a legend has been erected that it is from these artisans that the most ancient Scottish Lodge—Mary's Chapel—derived its origin.†

But it is certain at all events, that the munificence, or rather the prodigality, of David, in rearing ecclesiastical edifices, seriously impoverished the royal revenue. An old chronicler tells us, "King James the First quhen he com to Davidis sepulture at Dunfermeling, said, 'he was ane soir sanet for the crown : ' as he wald mene, that king David left the kirk our riche, and the crown our pure"‡

The number of religious edifices erected in Scotland during the twelfth century was very large, and the demand for operative masons must have been equally great. The supply of skilled workmen, it has been contended, could therefore only have been met by importing them from the trading associations on the continent.§

The foreign masons (so obtained) were long believed to have introduced their customs into Scotland, and the palm of priority as the centre of Operative Masonry in that kingdom was traditionally assigned to Kilwinning.

But the earliest lodge in Scotland, of which any distinct record has come down to us, is that of Mary Chapel, in Edinburgh, which city, from its ancient political importance—as the historian of Scottish Masonry well observes—is more likely to have been the centre of an Association of Builders than an obscure village in the provinces.||

It may, however, be safely laid down, that no argument whatever can be drawn from the existence or non-existence of local Masonic tradition, as all genuine tradition of the kind in Scotland was swept away by the famous oration of the Chevalier Ramsay, in 1737, which substituted for it a spurious tradition, awarding the palm of priority over all the other Scottish Lodges to the Lodge of Kilwinning.¶

It is, however, between York, the capital of the Deiri, and Edinburgh, or Edwinesburgh, the most famous city in the old realm of the Bernicians, that I wish to institute a comparison.

The existing craft legend may have had its origin in one of these centres, and have assumed its first set form in the other, but this point we shall approach later, and the idea is only thrown out, as it were, *en passant*, and in order that the importance of David's reign to the Masonic student, may not seem to have been overlooked.

The period, consisting of the reigns of David I., Malcolm IV., William the Lion, and Alexander the Second and Third, was characterized by the rapid amalgamation of the different provinces, and the spread of the Saxon race and feudal institutions over nearly the whole of the country.

During the first portion of her early history, Scotland may be viewed as a purely Celtic kingdom, with a population composed of different branches of the race popularly called Celts. But at a later period, though the connection between Scotland with her Celtic population, and Lothian with her English inhabitants was at first but slender, her monarchs identified themselves more and more with their Teutonic subjects, with whom the Celtic tribes maintained an ineffectual struggle, and gradually retreated before their increasing power and colonization, until they became confined to the mountains and western islands. The name of Scot passed over to the English-speaking people, and their language became known as the Scotch, while the Celtic language, formerly known as Scotch, became stamped with the title of Irish.**

David was succeeded by his grandson, called Malcolm IV. Henry II., son of the Empress Matilda, was now king of England. About this time, Northumberland and Cumbria south of the Solway, leaned towards the crown of England rather than that of Scotland; and at a meeting of the cousins at Chester, in 1157, it was agreed that Malcolm

* Burton, i., 442.

† Lyon, 242.

‡ Bellenden, xii., 20.

§ Lawrie, 90.

|| Lyon, 241.

¶ *Hist.* iii., 88.

** Skene i., 17.

should give up any claim to those possessions. He was, however, at the same time solemnly re-invested in the honour and earldom of Huntingdon—a possession of a very different kind, which a politic English king, observing the tendency of the feudal system, would like to see in the hands of a king of Scotland.*

Malcolm died in 1165, and was succeeded by his younger brother, commonly called the Lyon king. His first proceeding was to claim from the king of England the restitution of Northumberland, which had been assigned to him as an appanage by his father David, but had been surrendered along with Cumberland, during his brother Malcolm's reign.† This was refused, and he invaded the territory in dispute, but was taken prisoner at Alnwick, July 12th, 1174, by the English.

The value of such a captive was almost incalculable. The occurrence was found to have been prophesied by Merlin, and it was made out that it occurred on the same day when Henry II. expiated his great crime by his penance at the tomb of Thomas à Becket.‡

The admission of a complete feudal superiority over the kingdom of Scotland was the price at which Henry resolved to rate the liberation of his captive, and the matter was arranged in December, 1174, by what was called the treaty of Falaise. The obligation taken was for absolute homage for Scotland—homage as absolute as had been given for other estates held by the king of Scotland from the crown of England, and as absolute as the homage paid by any other vassals of England.§

In the following year the two monarchs met at York, and the conditions assented to at Falaise were solemnly sworn to and confirmed. They subjected the state of Scotland entirely to England, and the church, also, in all that was right and proper. In token of his submission the Scottish king deposited his spear and shield upon the altar of St. Peter in the minster, where they were for a long time preserved.||

To use the words of the late Mr. E. W. Robertson :—“ On August 10th, 1175, William the Lion, king of Scotland, with the bishops, abbots, earls, barons, knights, and other freeholders of that kingdom, swore fealty to Henry II. of England, and his eldest son. All became the liegemen of the English king in the cathedral church of St. Peter, at York whereby all the king of Scotland's lieges, whether clergy or laity, became in consequence the liegemen of the English king.”¶

The independence of Scotland was re-established—on payment of ten thousand marks of silver to Richard I.—December 5th, 1189, but in the interval the complete submission to Henry II. had made every native of Scotland “ his man,” which according to some high authorities was a step beyond the terms of the original commendation to Edward the Elder in 924, or even of the homage rendered to Canute by the king and under-kings of Scotland in 1031.**

The reign of William the Lion extended to the year 1214, and during the latter part of it, when King John of England had made himself so many enemies, he had some prospect of recovering, by force of arms, the Northumbrian and Anglo-Cumbrian provinces.†† These expectations were inherited by his son and successor, Alexander II., but the progress of events put an end to the hopes of acquiring the border provinces for Scotland. In 1237 there was a meeting of the kings of England and Scotland at York, at which Alexander resigned his right to the counties of Northumberland, Westmoreland, and Cumberland, and in return was granted by Henry III., certain manors in Cumberland and Northumberland, not in sovereignty, but in feudal property.‡‡

From this period the efforts to extend the Scots frontier cease, the people of the northern counties of England obtained quietness for a time, and the boundaries of the two kingdoms were virtually adjusted.§§

Alexander II. left a son, who succeeded him, with the title of Alexander III., and I shall now pass to a very brilliant scene, witnessed at York in 1252.

Henry III., his Queen, and the whole court kept their Christmas in that city, and they were joined there by the royal family of Scotland. Then it was that Alexander, the youthful monarch of the Scots, was married to Margaret, Henry's daughter. He performed homage for his English estates, Penrith and Tyndal, and was made a knight.

The ceremonial in the minster at the celebration of the nuptials must have been a magnificent one. More than a thousand knights in silken attire were in the train of the bride, and, when the wedding was over, such a banquet took place that the historian of the

* Burton i., 444, *ut supra*.

† Skene i., 474.

‡ Burton i., 447.

§ *Ibid*, 448.

|| *Fasti Ebor.*, 244.

¶ *Scotland under Her Early Kings*, i., 375; ii., 404.

** Robertson, *loc. cit.*, and Freeman i., 130, 447, 565.

†† Burton ii., 7.

‡‡ *Fasti Ebor.*, 286; Burton ii., 8.

§§ Burton ii., 9, 10.

occasion, conscious of his inability to describe it, shrinks altogether from the task. The Archbishop contributed as many as sixty oxen to the feast.*

Alexander's reign was a prosperous one, and the English claims seemed a vision of the past. But while riding in the dark along the coast of Fife, he was thrown from his horse and killed, on the 12th of March, 1286. Four years later his infant grand-daughter and heiress, the Maid of Norway, died at Orkney, on her way to Scotland, and the country became involved in the turmoil of a disputed succession.

It is affirmed by one set of writers, and denied by another, that Edward I. was invited to become the arbiter of this dispute. But however this may be, it is at least certain that he first of all placed John Baliol on the Scottish throne, but shortly afterwards took the northern kingdom into his own hand, compelling all ranks to do homage to him.

But with the events of the War of Independence we are here rather collaterally than directly concerned, as they are only of interest to the extent that they may throw any light upon the subject of the present digression. The scene must therefore be once again shifted to York, and I shall go back to A.D. 1284, in which year the cathedral there received within its walls a most illustrious assemblage.

Up to this date York had possessed no saint exclusively its own. John of Beverley had been its bishop, but his shrine was at Beverley. In 1227 a movement was made to obtain the canonization of Archbishop William (1143-54). It was, however, about fifty years later before this was done by Pope Nicholas III. Perhaps the most magnificent gathering of royalty, nobles, and ecclesiastics that York Minster has ever witnessed took place on the 8th of January, 1283-4, at the translation of the bones of the saint from their resting-place in the nave, to the shrine prepared for them behind the high altar.†

A double ceremony took place that day—the translation of St. William, and the consecration of that noble-minded man who had secured for the church of York the canonization of its Archbishop. Anthony Bek—the bishop-elect of Durham, who was called,

“Le plus vaillant clerk de royaume,”

was surrounded by the chief estates of England, including Edward I. and his gentle consort. The king had recently fallen from an eminence, and had escaped unhurt. He ascribed his good fortune to the agency of St. William, and hastened to York to show his gratitude by being present at the translation of his body.‡

No less than thirty-six marvels, wrought through William's intercession, are recorded in the magnificent window known as St. William's window, in the north aisle of the minster.

The Rev. J. T. Fowler tells us:—“Among the fifty compartments (of the window) representing miracles of St. William, are several representing miracles of St. John of Beverley. The most probable explanation of this co-mingling seems to be as follows: Until the acquisition of St. William as patron saint of York, St. John of Beverley, Archbishop of York in the eighth century, held that position. The right of sanctuary enjoyed by Beverley at that period, and which gave it another ground of precedence, was connected with the relics of St. John. On any great emergency the York clergy were in the habit of going to Beverley, to appeal in person to the clemency of their patron.” This is clear, not to mention other instances, from an account in the ‘Acta Sanctorum,’ written before the time of St. William, of the clergy of York, on one occasion when there was a great drought, having gone to Beverley to implore the assistance of St. John. His feretory was carried in procession; the sky, before cloudless and serene, gradually became wild and overcast; rain fell in torrents to refresh the parched earth; and the monks went back to York full of praises towards, and confidence in, their glorious Confessor. Nothing seems more natural, therefore, than that after the death of St. William and the beginning of miracles at his tomb, some at least of those of the earlier saint, with which the people were more familiar, should have gradually got mixed up with those of the latter, and, *in days when books were few and instruction chiefly oral*, should have become attributed to him.

It was unreasonable that the saint of the metropolitan city should be outdone in miracles by the saint of Beverley, to say nothing of the natural tendency of later miracles to outshine those that go before. If St. John of Beverley cured a man of blindness, well, St. William gave back eyes to a man named Ralph—whose eyes had been bodily extracted, and carried off, none knew where, by a boy of the name of Hugh.”||

* *Fasti Ebor.*, 288, *ut supra*. † *Yorkshire Legends and Traditions*, 88. ‡ *Fasti Ebor.*, 228.

§ This is incorrect. The first Archbishop was Paulinus, and the second Egbert, A.D. 735. The inter-mediate Bishops never received the pall.

|| *Yorkshire Archæol. and Topogr. Journal*, iii., 198—348; *Yorkshire Legends and Traditions*, 88—90. In the brief or petition to the Pope in 1226, for the canonization of William, it is related that Ralph received back two eyes, smaller, and of a different colour than his former ones, but giving him again sharp and clear sight.

The story of St. William of York has been brought into the narrative, because in common with those of St. Wilfrid of Ripon, and St. John of Beverley, it may not have been wholly without influence in shaping or fashioning the Legend of the Craft, in the particular form it has come down to us.*

From the date of the canonization of William, the relative superiority of Beverley over York, as possessing a shrine of greater sanctity, began to disappear, nor can we wonder that such was the case, when we glance at the official register of the marvels which were wrought at his sepulchre. Thus, in the book of chapter acts, the following extraordinary circumstance is said to have occurred on St. William's Day, 1290 :—“ Mutus quidam ad tumbam ipsius Sancti usum lingæ recepit in aurora diei, cujus lingua ante triennium per latrones fuerat amputata.”†

The following is an extract from the register of William de Melton, Archbishop of York, 1317-40 :—

“ 1328, Jan. 4. Penance enjoined by the Archbishop to Sir Peter de Mauley, knight, for adultery with Sara de London. On every Friday in Lent, the Ember days and Advent, for seven years, he is to fast on bread and small beer, and on Good Friday and the vigil of the festival of All Saints, to use only bread and water. He is to make a pilgrimage to the shrines of S. William of York, S. Thomas of Hereford, B. M. at Southwell, S. John of Beverley, and S. Wilfrid of Ripon, and is to be ‘ fustigated ’ seven times before a procession in the Church of York, ‘ in sola basna, capucio deposito.’ ”‡

From the foregoing may be derived a glimpse of the manners of those early times, but the object with which I cite it is to show that—under the third king Edward—while the reputation of Archbishop William had advanced, that of Bishops Wilfrid and John, of York, had by no means declined.

During the wars with Scotland the city of York became the great rendezvous of the English armies, and for a time, as it were, the capital of England. In 1298 Edward I. held a parliament there, while the courts of justice were also removed thither from London, and did not return for seven years. In 1299 a large army assembled at York under the command of John de Warren, Earl of Surrey, for service in Scotland. There were two more parliaments held there—in 1299 and 1300—in the presence of the king, and Edward with his family spent much time in the city.

Ultimately, as we all know, Edward I. temporarily subdued Scotland, and the whole country, except William Wallace, laid down their arms and their freedom, on the 9th of February, 1304.

Some proceedings, however, of the king, between 1298 and 1301, are of interest in our inquiry. In 1290 and again in 1299, Edward issued writs to the various monasteries and other religious houses, ordering returns in some instances, of all that their registers or chronicles contained about the relations between England and Scotland; in others, of any information so appearing concerning homage by the king of Scotland to the king of England.

Out of the matter obtained from these returns, and the chronicles of England at large, a case was made out for the superiority of the king of England over Scotland. This was afterwards embodied in the historical narrative, signed and sealed by Edward and no less than a hundred and four of his Barons, in which the whole question was brought under the consideration of the Papal Court.§

According to this document, in the time of Eli and Samuel, Brutus, the Trojan, discovered the isle of Albion, which he re-named Bruton or Britain, and founded the town of Trinovantum, now called London. Brutus had three sons, Loclin, Albanac, and Camber, and they inherited England, Scotland, and Wales, respectively. Of these, Loclin was the first-born, and it is laid down as having been the invariable practice of succession in Troy, that the eldest and his line should rule over the younger brothers and their descendants.

The victories of the great king Arthur and his supremacy over the Scots, are then recounted, after which comes the familiar story of Athelstan's expedition to the north, and this having already been related,|| will be best re-told in the words of an entirely distinct authority.

* By this is meant that if the germs of the old Manuscript Constitutions were not in existence before 1284—the acquisition of a local saint, having his shrine in the minster, may, with some show of plausibility be held to strengthen the supposition that the Legend of the Craft had its origin at York, in the early part of the fourteenth century. † *Fasti Ebor.*, 227.

‡ Mauley was an old offender, and the Archbishop, probably, was glad to catch him. In the 9th of Edward II. the king ordered an enquiry to be made into an affair in which he (Mauley) and others were concerned. They had opened and carried off a car containing as many as seven nuns from Watton Abbey.—*Fasti Ebor.*, 419.

§ Walsingham, 55; *Rot. Parl.* iv., 85; *Fœdera*, ii., 771, 873; Hume, ii., 251, 307; Burton, ii., 139, 212; Skene, *Chronicles of the Picts and Scots*, clxix., clxxv. || *Ante*, 45.

"It is impossible," observes Mr. Burton, "to estimate the weight attributed to the next precedent, without remembering that king Edward was deeper even than his age in reverence for the later saints and their miracles. King Athelstan, of England, it was said, had under the auspices of St. John of Beverley subdued a rebellion in Scotland. Having finished his work, he prayed, through the intervention of the same St. John, that it might be granted to him to receive a visible and tangible token, by which all future ages might be assured that the Scots were rightfully subject to the king of England. His prayer was granted in this way: Standing in front of one of the rocks at Dunbar, he made a cut at it with his sword, and left a score which proved to be the precise length of an ell, and was adopted as the regulation test of that measure of length. This miracle was attested by a weekly service in the church of St. John of Beverley. He was perhaps the most powerful miracle-worker of all the English saints, and king Edward and some of his advisers would devoutly believe that his story of the miraculously-created ell-wand standard would do more for his cause than his long array of historical precedents; but it may be questioned if the acute scribes working at the Vatican conceded so much influence to it, for they were apt to be perplexed and overburdened by such miraculous solutions of temporal difficulties."*

The case for the English crown concludes with citations of the various submissions made by Scottish kings to Edward the Elder, and his successors, to which, as they have been already noticed in this digression, it will be unnecessary to do more than refer.

Mr. Burton's statement that Edward I. was profoundly impressed by the alleged miracle at Dunbar, is fully borne out by the action of this king, who honoured the town of Beverley with three distinct visits. The first took place on the 24th day of November, A.D. 1299, in the 28th year of his reign. He remained there three days, and was lodged and entertained by the collegiate society of St. John's. From entries in the wardrobe account for this year, it appears that he left some valuable tokens of his munificence to the different orders of the clergy, and also commanded that the standard of St. John should be taken into Scotland.

"To Master Gilbert de Grymmesby, vicar of the Collegiate Church of St. John de Beverley, for his wages from the 25th day of November, on which day he left Beverley to proceed, by command of the King, with the standard of St. John, in the king's suite aforesaid, to various parts of Scotland, until the 9th day of January, both computed, 46 days, at 8½d. per diem, £1 8s. 9d.

"To the same, for his wages from the 10th day of January, the day on which he departed from the court, going with the standard aforesaid, to his home at Beverley, the 15th of the same month, both days inclusive, being six days, at 1s. per diem 6s. 0d.

"By his own hands at Meriton . . . together £1 14s. 9d."

The banner of St. John had, however, been conveyed to Scotland some years previously, and by the hands of the same custodian.†

Edward again visited Beverley, accompanied by his queen and eldest son, in 1300, and was also there in 1306.‡

The following is an extract from the register of William de Greenfield, Archbishop of York, 1304-15:—

"August 28th, 1310.—Licence to John de Rolleston, one of the seven clerks in the Church of Beverley, and chaplain of the chantry of the fraternity of St. Nicholas, to carry the standard of St. John of Beverley to the wars in Scotland, by the king's order."§

From the foregoing it will appear that Edward II. inherited his father's deeply-rooted belief in the efficacy of St. John's banner as a talisman in the day of battle.

No later instance of this standard having been carried out to the wars has met my eye, though, as we have already seen, the fame of St. John, as a worker of miracles, outlasted the line of the Plantagenets, and to his intercession was also attributed the great victory of Agincourt.||

But it may be assumed, I think, that in the fourteenth century, in York itself, the memory of St. John was gradually confused with, and at last obscured by, that of St. William.

Under the second Edward, a parliament was held at York in 1319—and in 1321, the courts of Justice were again removed from London to that city, and remained there for half a year. Again the hopes of England seemed to centre in the metropolis of the North. Edward III. was married at York in 1328, and in 1334 he held a parliament there.¶

* *Hist. Scotland*, ii., 213. † *Lib. Quot. Cont., Garderobae*, 51, 334. ‡ *Beverlac*, 84, 86.
§ *Fasti Ebor.*, 380. || *Ante*, 47 ¶ *Fasti Ebor.*, 402, 404, 410; *Beverlac*, 99.

Here, in bringing the narrative to a close, it may be observed, that we again find the seat of the northern primacy occupying a commanding position, and with the facts I have laid before the reader, gain a further clue to the legend which bears its name.

The historian of Scottish Masonry, in his well-known work, commenting upon the "Kilwinning" version of the Old Charges or Manuscript Constitutions, observes:—

"That it was a production of the sister kingdom is evident, from its containing a charge in which 'every man that is a mason' is taken bound to 'be liedgeman to the king of England,' and also from that part of the legend which refers to the introduction and spread of masonry in Britain, being confined to the rehearsal of the patronage extended to the Craft by English kings."*

The "charge" or clause referred to, which I extract from the Kilwinning MS.,† is as follows:—

"And also that yee should be liedgemen [and bear true Allegiance]‡ to the king of England, without treason or any other falsehoode; and that yee know not treason or treacherie; but you amend it if you may; or also warne the king or his council thereof."

Of these "Old Charges" there are four Scottish versions,—or to use words of greater precision, four versions of which the custody is Scottish.

They are, the "Kilwinning," "Atcheson Haven," "Aberdeen," and "Melrose" MSS. and will be found at the numbers 14 to 17 inclusive, in the calendar which has been already given of these instruments.§

The "Atcheson Haven" MS. has, "yow sall be true to the king," and the words "of England" do not appear, but in the other three forms they are given.

The remaining versions or copies of the "Old Charges" (in English custody) ordinarily, though not invariably, contain a similar recital to that already quoted from the "Kilwinning" MS., and in the exceptions to the general rule, we meet with the words "true" (or "liegeman") "to the king," as in the "Atcheson Haven" MS.

On the strength of this, and the omission of any reference to the Scottish kings as patrons of Masonry, it has been laid down (in effect) by Lyon,—whose *dictum* has been universally accepted,|| that all the Old Charges are of English origin.

Here it is necessary to be precise, for if by the word "English" we are to understand "English-speaking people," I shall raise no demurrer to the general accuracy of this proposition. But if, on the other hand, we are asked to accept as a settled point in Masonic history, the impossibility of the unwritten traditions of the Craft having assumed their first set form in what was once English, but is now Scottish, territory—I shall ask my readers to at least hold their judgment in suspense, while I attempt to lay before them some considerations which seem to me to have hitherto either eluded the research of, or to have been passed over by, our historians.

But in order to clear the ground, I shall first deal with that part of the Masonic Legend "which refers to the spread of masonry in Britain, being confined to the rehearsal of the patronage extended to the Craft by English kings."

Here it is quite clear, that if the Legend of the Craft is of *late* mediæval origin, the omission of any reference to the Scottish kings, would be inconsistent with the supposition, that it could have had either its origin or development, in any part of Britain under their immediate government. But the entire body of evidence, such as it is, seems to bear in the direction of a much higher antiquity for the source or sources whence the Manuscript Constitutions were derived.

That the Edwin of Masonic tradition, is identical with Edwin of Northumbria, seems to me fairly inferential, from the fact that the latter was an undoubted patron of Operative Masonry, A.D. 627. The Athelstan of the Legend, can be identified with even greater ease, and he equally owes his position in Masonic history to an actual connection with York and its famous Minster.

If, indeed, in the skein of fable of which the Masonic legend is composed, there be a solitary thread of fact, it appears to me that we must look for it among those of our traditions which can be associated in any way with the city of York and the cathedral there.

It is noteworthy, also, as supporting the claim for its antiquity, that no later English king than Athelstan is referred to in the legend.

We should bear in mind, moreover, that it was not until the reign of David I. (1124) or precisely two centuries after Athelstan began his (924), that there existed any Scottish king who could possibly be made to figure as a distinguished patron of the plastic art.

* Lyon, 108.

† *Proleg.*, 8.

‡ The words within brackets are added by me from "York" MS., No. 1.

§ *Proleg.*, 8.

|| *Hist.*, i., 90, 433.

I now pass to the other branch of the proposition. This relates to the *laws* of the Craft, and is founded on the "charge," to be liegemen to the king of England.

The Regius MS. has only the lesser injunction, to be true to the king (*ll.* 431-34), but its companion in my system of classification, the Cooke MS.,* which is of far earlier date as a written document than the oldest of the actual MS. Constitutions, contains the following :

"At the fyrst begynnyng, now men that never were chargyd bi fore, [shall be] charged in this manere—That . . . they schall be trewe to the kynge of englond, and to the realm " (*ll.* 912-27).

The suggestion I have now to make is, that the words "king of England" would be unnecessary and out of place, except in a locality where there was any risk of a confusion of allegiance. This, for example, in the reigns of Edwin and Athelstan would have been impossible in Deira and Wessex respectively, where a reference to the king, *simpliciter*, could only have pointed to the immediate sovereign of the district. But in the external dominions of either, the term would at best have been but an ambiguous one, and open to misconstruction.

Thus to repeat somewhat, Edwin in the Deira, and Athelstan in Wessex, were each of them both lord and over-lord, while the former in Wessex or Mercia, and the latter in Bernicia, were only in either case the over-lords.

The vernacular title "King of England" could hardly have come into use before the reign of Canute,† but things generally exist before names, and it is immaterial to the point for which I am contending, what were the regal titles severally used by his predecessors.

Neither am I concerned, at this stage, with regard to any approximate date at which the injunction, to be true to the king, as forming a "charge" in Masonry, can be set down.

This, to the extent, at all events, that a subject lying in such obscurity, can be investigated, will presently engage our attention, but before we essay the consideration of how and when the "charge" in question got into the Manuscript Constitutions, it will be advisable to arrive at some conclusion with regard to the meaning of the words which make it up.

From the time of Athelstan down to the Norman Conquest, and from the Conqueror to Edward I. and later, the oath of allegiance was annually administered to every freeman of twelve (or fourteen) years and upwards, at what was called the View of Frank pledge.‡ The following is a copy of this oath :—

"You shall swear that from this day forward you shall be true and faithfull to our Sovereign Lord the King and his heires, and truth and faith shall bear of life, and member, and terrene honour. And you shall neither know, nor hear of any ill or dammage intended unto him, that you shall not defend :—So help you God."§

With the foregoing, I shall ask the reader to compare the extract already given from the Kilwinning MS.|| Of the latter document, Mr. Lyon says :—

"We here present what we believe to be a transcript of the Masonic Legend and Charges which, with certain modifications, would in all probability be used by the Lodge of Edinburgh in the initiation of its intrants *in the middle of the seventeenth century.*"¶

Virtually, therefore, the two excerpts between which I am instituting a comparison, stand on the same level as regards antiquity, and as survivals of more ancient forms, their general resemblance is very suggestive of their common origin.

At the View of Frank Pledge, it will be seen, the charge or injunction "to be true to the king," was given, but without the additional words "of England," upon which I have dilated.

This reading I assume to be the normal one, and the corresponding "charge" in the Manuscript Constitutions, I believe to have been derived from it.

Here it may be necessary to say, that a distinction must be drawn between the Legend and the Laws (or regulations), as while the leading features of the *tradition* would remain unaltered, the *customs* and *statutes* of the early Masons could not fail to become greatly modified in the course of successive centuries.

This point will again come before us in the third digression, and I shall, at this stage, merely lay down the postulate, that the words "liegemen to the king of England" must be regarded as an abnormal rendering of a clause or regulation, forming part of a very ancient system of police.

* *Ante*, *proleg.*

† Freeman i., 585 ; *ante*, 44, note ‡, *q. v.*

‡ *Ante*, 37.

§ Powoll, *Jurisdictions of the Ancient Courts of Leet, or View of Frank-Pledge* (1642), 16-19.

|| *Ante*, 61.

¶ *Hist. L. of Edin.*, 108.

South of the Tees, it must have been wholly unnecessary to describe Athelstan, or any of his successors who ruled over undivided England, as more than "the king," *simpliciter*, but northward, or beyond that boundary, owing to the semi-independence of the Lords of Bamburgh, and the gradual encroachment of the Scots, things stood on quite another footing, and we may reasonably conclude that in this portion of his dominions, the king of England, for the time being, was referred to throughout several centuries by his full title.

The Craft Legend must have originated in one of three periods, and of these the reader will obtain a better grasp, by glancing at the three maps which have been drawn with so much care and exactitude by Bro. G. W. Speth, our ever-willing secretary, to illustrate this portion of the *Commentary*.

The first period ranges from the time of Edwin of Northumbria to that of the great Alfred; the second, from the Danish settlement in England to the accession of Edward the Elder; and the third from Edward the Elder down to the date of the Regius MS.

The maps show:—I., the several Teutonic kingdoms into which England was for a long time divided, and is designed to illustrate, as nearly as may be, their territorial limits in the seventh, and early part of the eighth centuries; II., the partition of England, by the "Peace of Wedmore," into Alfred's kingdom and the *Danelagh*; and III., England, both previous to and after the final cession of Lothian to the Scots.

With regard to the first Period, the Saxons, when they arrived, were mere barbarians, and had, of course, no architecture—properly so-called—of their own. But when Christianity and civilization had become firmly established, a good many churches were erected, especially in the North, which in the earliest and best times, was the main seat of Anglo-Saxon genius. But the Northumbrians when they commenced to build were obliged to import workmen, and they also sent abroad when they commenced to restore. Benedict Biscop (629-90), who may be regarded as the first patron of architecture among them, about A.D. 674, went over to France to engage "cementarios," in order that his church at Monk Wearmouth might be built "according to the manner of the Romans, which he had always loved;" and St Wilfrid, of York (634-709), slightly later, brought over with him eminent builders and artists from Rome, Italy, France, and other countries.*

From this, indeed, if we allowed ourselves to stray into the region of conjecture, a speculation might be advanced, that the Italian workmen imported by Wilfrid, may have formed Guilds—in imitation of the Collegia, which perhaps still existed in some form in Italy—to perpetuate the art among the natives, and hence the legend of Edwin and the Grand Lodge of York. But alas for this hypothesis, Deira, the southern moiety of Northumbria, was the district most completely over-run by the Danes, and also in later years the part of England most effectually ravaged by the Conqueror.

During the era which next ensued, on the deaths of Benedict Biscop and Wilfrid, the prosperity of the southern province was at its height, but towards the close of the eighth century, the Danish storm began to rise, and soon its full fury burst on Northumbria.†

After this followed a dreary span of years, until a partial revival took place under the Great Alfred, but by this time the architectural genius of the Anglo-Saxons had disappeared, and the country gradually decayed, awaiting the arrival of a superior race.

The next Period will be almost sufficiently illustrated by the second map. The only character of earlier date, who figures in the Craft Legend, is Edwin, and it is probable that the reputation of this prince, which has come down to us on the authority of Bede, was also preserved for a long while in the memory of the people. Still, with regard to this there is no certainty, nor can we regard such a supposition as being anything more than a plausible conjecture.

Plausible, however, it certainly is, and the great point which Mr. Robertson has established, viz., that while Deira was actually divided and occupied by the Danes, Bernicia still remained occupied by the Englishmen, and under the actual government of English rulers, must be regarded as harmonizing with, and perhaps lending colour to the hypothesis.‡

The third Period begins with the homage done to Edward the Elder, as over-lord, and then we get to the era of King Athelstan, who may be pronounced to be in every way the central figure in the Legend of the Craft.

It is remarkable that our written traditions, by which I mean the various recitals in the Old Charges or Manuscript Constitutions, are brought to a close with the reign of

* *Hist. i.*, 272, 300; An interesting essay, entitled, "The Legend of the Introduction of Masons into England," by Bro. W. H. Rylands, will be found in the *Masonic Magazine*, April and May, 1882.

† *Ante*, 43. There were three periods of the Danish invasions; the 1st,—of simple plunder, 787-855; the 2nd,—of settlement, 855-97; and the 3rd,—of political conquest, 980-1016.—Freeman, i., 43.

‡ *Ante*, 43.

Athelstan. Also, that in no copy whatever of these ancient documents, is the "History of Masonry," as it is termed, embellished with the record of a later English sovereign.

From this, we may, I think, infer, either that the Craft Legend is inseparably connected with York Minster; or that it had its origin in Anglo-Saxon times, and before the revival of architecture under the Normans at the end of the eleventh century.

We have already seen, that under Athelstan the only part of England that retained the semblance of independence, was Bernicia, then governed by Ealdred, the Lord of Bamburgh, who submitted to him A.D. 926. This infinitesimal kingship, we have likewise seen, was exchanged for the Earldom over both provinces, in 954. But though the power as well as the dignity of the Lords of Bamburgh may have waned under Athelstan and his two brothers, their authority soon revived, as witness the Battle of Carham, A.D. 1018, where unaided, Eadulf Cudel contended (though unsuccessfully) with the army of Malcolm II., King of Scots.

It was after the final cession of Lothian, which followed this Scottish victory, that I consider the injunction "to be liegemen to the king of England" must have crept into the Masonic Charges. But in getting back to the days of oral recitation, it is impossible to be precise, nor have we any means of accurately determining, the extent to which the legend and the laws of the Craft were popularly rehearsed, before the date—whatever it may be—of their having been committed to writing.

But I must pass lightly over ground that has been already so fully traversed, and with regard to Lothian and Strathclyde (or Cumbria), will merely ask the reader to bear in mind the peculiar relation in which they stood, for a long time, to the crowns of Scotland and England.

After A.D. 1066, when a brilliant inventive nobility, and a cultivated and wealthy clergy took possession of the country, the rude Saxon Churches were superseded by edifices designed by foreign architects in the Norman or late Romanesque style, the distinctive feature of which was its massiveness. One of the most widely-read of our historians, tells us:—

"The century which followed the Conquest witnessed an outburst of architectural energy which covered the land with castles and cathedrals; but castle and cathedral alike owed their existence to the loans of the Jew. His own example gave a new direction to domestic architecture. The buildings which, as at Lincoln and St. Edmondsbury, still retain their title of 'Jews' Houses,' were almost the first houses of stone which superseded the mere hovels of the English burghers. Nor was the influence of the Jews simply industrial. Through their connection with the Jewish schools in Spain and the East they opened a way for the revival of physical science. A Jewish medical school seems to have existed at Oxford. Adelard of Bath brought back a knowledge of mathematics from Cordova; Roger Bacon himself studied under the English Rabbis."*

A very large number of Jews took up their abode in York, † whence in common with the rest of their co-religionists in England, they were banished the kingdom in 1290. Their number at this time has been placed as high as 16,500. But this exodus was highly favourable to the circulation of their learning in England. There was a prodigious sale of Hebrew manuscripts, and these treasures were eagerly bought up by English scholars. ‡

Of the posthumous fame achieved by Saints John of Beverley and Wilfrid of Ripon, we have seen a good deal, but the greater part of it may, without doubt, be referred to the splendid precedent established by Athelstan's successful march against the Scots.

This it was that took captive the imagination of Edward I., who, having commenced his search for legends in 1290, must have been induced thereby to exhibit in 1296, a preference for the standard of St. John over that of St. Wilfrid, as being a talisman of higher efficacy, to be carried before him in the wars.

The Beverley Charter has been described, though somewhat loosely, as "a production of the reign of Edward I., about the year 1300." § This invites comparison. The argument of Mr. Poulson may be convincing or the reverse, but at any rate it is free from Masonic bias, and supplies us therefore with an independent criticism of an ancient writing, between which and the Old Charges in matter, and the Regius MS. in matter and form, there are points of resemblance.

Similar causes produce similar results. *Three* shrines were visited and endowed by Athelstan, and if his grants to *two* of them were embodied in verse about the year 1300, it is at least a reasonable conjecture that the same thing may have occurred with the *third*.

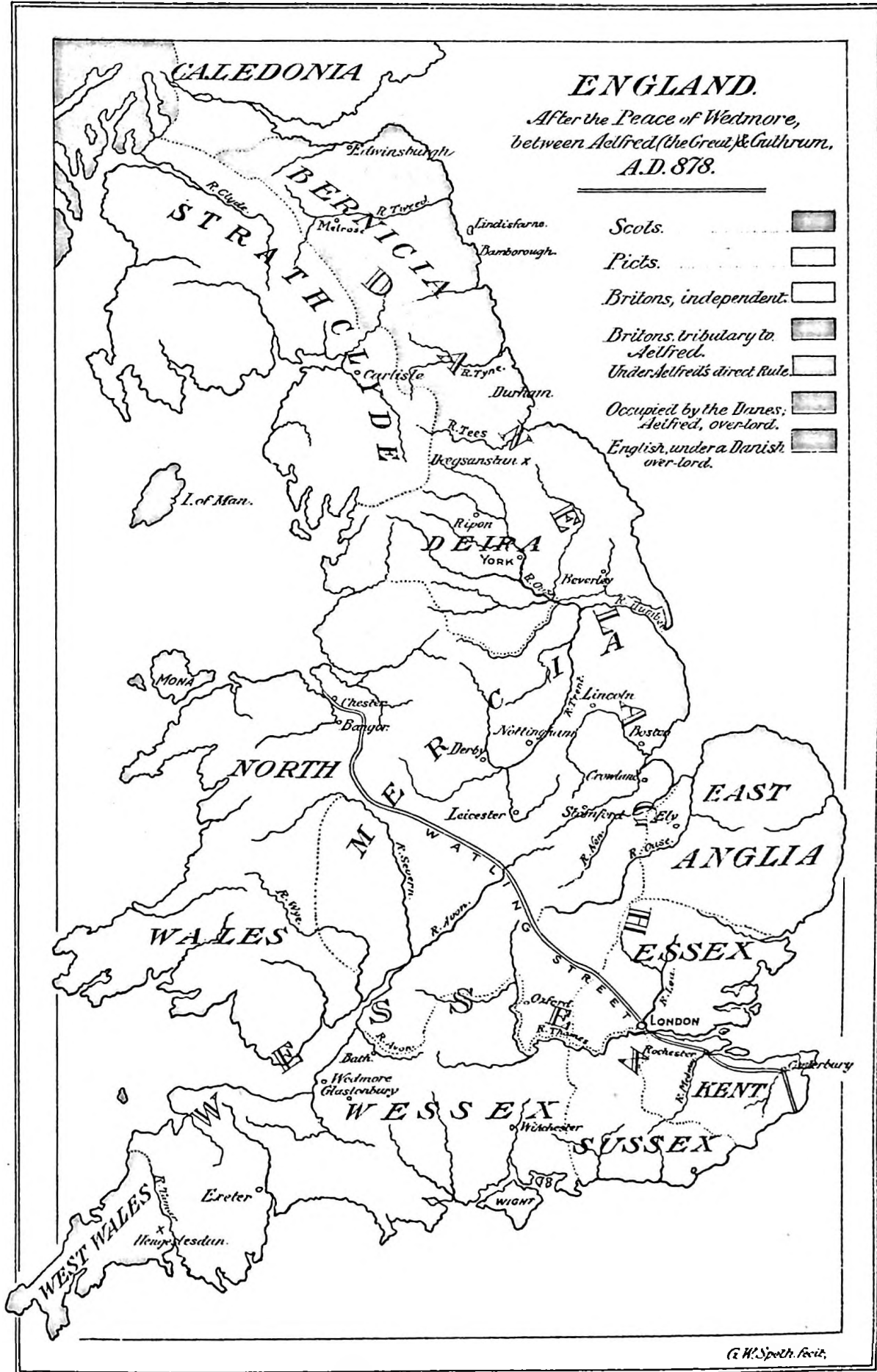
* Green, *Short Hist. Eng. People*, 83, *ut supra*.

† *Ante*, 32.

‡ *Anglia Judaica*, 244, 245; Blunt, *The Jews in England*, 65.

§ *Ante*, 49, *q.v.*

MAP II.



But even if the supposition be entertainable, that the rhyming charters of Ripon and Beverley, are indebted for their existence, to the memory of Athelstan and his expedition, having been stirred up by Edward I., the date of production assigned to them, at least in my judgment, is too early.

There may, indeed, at some time, have been a metrical charter, either written or traditionary, at York, similar to those at Ripon and Beverley, and if so, it may have formed either wholly or in part, the original basis on which the Craft Legend has been erected.

But I am inclined to attach greater importance to the circulation of heroic deeds, and pious benefactions, by means of song and recitation; and if there was a charter at all—in the sense that one formed the groundwork of either the poem or the Old Charges—I think it must have been a charter to a Guild, with which some kind of a metrical history of Masonry or Geometry was incorporated.

The question of such a charter, however, will come in more properly at the close of this digression, as falling more strictly within the province of the previous one.*

An instance has been afforded, on an earlier page, of the Bishop of Winchester having been amused and entertained by the recital of local legends in the cathedral priory of St. Swithin in his diocese.†

This occurred in the year 1338, and it will not be unreasonable to imagine that the dignified ecclesiastics of the northern primacy were occasionally diverted in the same way by songs and recitals of an historical or legendary character. At this time they had their own local saint, whose miracles would no doubt be done ample justice to by the minstrels, while the foundation of the Minster Church by St. Edwin, and the victorious march of Athelstan, could not fail to be also sung or related.

Upon these two incidents I have already laid great stress, although, as we are told by a leading authority, “all attempts to rationalize the legends of ancient or modern mythology, to separate a historical nucleus from its fabulous covering, to distil truth from fiction by a process of analytical reasoning, are misleading and mischievous.”‡ But while fully admitting how difficult it is to discern the track of real history among the mists of fable, there seems in the present instance hardly any room for doubt that the Edwin and Athelstan of history, are equally the Edwin and Athelstan of fable.

The fable, or legend, is evidently grounded on local tradition, and this it is probable, was recited orally in Northumbria, but first reduced into writing in some other part of the kingdom. The latter impression I derive from the anachronism, which converts Edwin into the son of Athelstan, as transformations of the kind must, from the nature of things, have been very frequent, whenever stories or romances passed out of the localities where they originated, but still continued to be handed down from one generation to another, by song and recitation. Of this, indeed, we have many earlier examples, dating back to the Teutonic settlements in England. Mr. Wright tells us, “As the Saxons became in the course of time more and more firmly settled in, and identified with, Britain, their recollections of their old country became continually less vivid, the traditions connected with it less definite, and they began to forget the meaning of many of the old legends, although they were still punctually handed down from father to son.” The same writer also states “*In more than one instance we find the events of some older family romance mixed up with the life of an historical personage.*”§

While allowing therefore a wide latitude, both as regards time and locality, *within* the territorial limits of old Northumbria, for the diffusion of the separate lays out of which the existing Craft Legend appears to have been constructed, I am of opinion that the first appearance of the latter, in written language, took place in some other part of Britain.

According to Hallam, the system or law of Frank Pledge, was unknown in Northumbria.|| This may seem to invalidate one of the speculations I have thrown out,¶ but without labouring this point, upon which the authorities are at variance, it will be sufficient to say that if workmen were imported from the south, they must have carried with them a recollection of the laws to which they had previously been accustomed; also, that at York in the fourteenth century, there was a duly appointed pledge-day in each year, when the masons and other operatives swore to observe the various orders ordained for their management.**

It is a little singular, that in the Old Charges or Manuscript Constitutions, Masonry and Christianity are made to proceed hand in hand together in Britain. The introduction of the science is carried back to St. Alban's time, while its chief development takes place at the

* *Ante*, 34, *q.v.* † *Ibid.*, 24. ‡ Lewis, *Methods of Observation and Reasoning in Politics*, i., 253.
§ *Biog. Brit. Lit.*, i., 15, 16. || *Middle Ages*, ii., 293. ¶ *Ante*, 62. ** See *post*, 72.

instance of Edwin. Here, perhaps, though at several removes from the original writings, and at still more from the oral recitations upon which these were based, may be dimly traced some teachings of the Colidei, founded upon and illustrated by, the lives and deaths of two famous champions of, and martyrs for the faith.

It has been already shown, that at the close of the eleventh century the Culdees or Colidei, founded at York, a hospital or halting-place for the poor; also, that the custom of entertaining pilgrims and strangers was a usual, or rather an invariable one, in their monasteries.*

In the Culdee hospital at York, therefore, were received the wayfarers. These were, in the first place, buffoons, glee-men, perambulating minstrels, and singers; then messengers, pedlars, and itinerant chapmen; lastly the out-laws, thieves of all kinds, peasants out of bond, or jobbing workmen. To ecclesiastical life belonged preachers, mendicant friars, and pardoners. Lastly there were pilgrims, whose object was religious, but in whose ranks, as in Chaucer's book, clerk and lay were mingled.†

To the wandering class also belonged the representatives of many other professions, such as scribes, tinkers, cobblers, masons and others.

"The great questions of the age, the social and religious questions, march towards their solution; partly on the high road, and partly by the influence of the wanderer.

For good or evil it may be said that the wanderers acted as 'microbes' in mediæval history, a numerous, scarcely visible, powerful host."‡

To this motley throng may doubtless be attributed the general circulation of many northern songs and romances, and among them, it is very possible, the stories of St. Edwin—king and martyr—and of Athelstan's famous march against the Scots.

Among the wayfarers, as we have seen, were minstrels, upon the influence of which profession, in the perpetuation of tradition, I have already enlarged, and there were also masons, through whom in preference to the former class, we may reasonably imagine the legend of their own special craft must have first taken root in written language.

These wandering masons, and with them carpenters, are also said to have moved about in bodies, and an old chronicler of the twelfth century speaks of both French and English, skilled in stone and wood-work, travelling in guilds or societies, for the purpose of building, and he likewise tells us that our kings impressed their workmen from these sodalities, when they required them.§

The oldest dated form of the Old Charges—"Grand Lodge" MS.—speaks as a written document, from 1583, but the legend it embalms is carried back by the evidence of the Masonic Poem, positively to the fifteenth, and presumably (as being based on a still older document), to the fourteenth century. This brings us to the period of social fermentation, so graphically described by the French writer from whose pages some extracts have been given,|| and at this time, if at no earlier date, the floating traditions of the Masonic body were probably welded into the form in which we now possess them.

Having concluded the second, I now revert to the first digression, in accordance with the method of treatment of which an outline has been foreshadowed.¶

It has seemed to me, at least a reasonable supposition, that the Old Charges or Manuscript Constitutions had become fixed or crystallized before the Regius MS. took form as a writing. From this, however, I do not wish it to be inferred that in my judgment the legendary history and the laws were copied into the latter from the former; such a contention would be altogether foreign to my argument; for though Masonic writings are unequivocally referred to in the poem (*ll.* 2, 143), I have already expressed my belief that all the separate pieces in the Regius MS. came down to us through a rythmical channel.**

But inasmuch as the York Legend is plainly given in the Old Charges, whereas it can only be made out by implication in the Poem, I have thought it best to introduce a short study of that ancient tradition, before dealing with a few remaining points, falling in strictness within the scope of the first digression, and the consideration of which I shall now resume and conclude.

The Regius MS. has been described by a non-Masonic writer, "as nothing more than a metrical version of the rules of an ordinary mediæval Guild, or perhaps a very superior and exemplary sort of trades' union, together with a number of pieces of advice for behaviour

* *Ante*, 51.

† Jussorand, *Wayfaring Life in the Middle Ages* (xivth century), translated by Lucy T. Smith, 175 G.

‡ *Ibid*, 405-0, *ut supra*.

§ Herbert, i., 3.

|| Jussorand, *loc. cit.*

¶ *Ante*, 34.

** *Ante*, 32.

at church, and at table, or in the presence of superiors, tacked on at the end." Of the Articles and Points he adds, "They are very simple, and consist chiefly of good advice to Master Masons on the choice of apprentices, and in their behaviour toward their fellows, applicable to any trade as well as Masonry, and, in some cases, to any men, whether of any craft or not."*

That the Masonic Poem was in the possession of a Guild, and that the Guild so possessing it, was not composed of operative masons, are propositions which I think can be established, but before attempting to do this I shall ask the reader to kindly bear a few data in recollection.

The laws of the Frank-Pledge, or Frith-Guild System were codified, and the Statutes of the London Guilds were reduced into writing, under Athelstan,† who was, moreover, a great giver of charters.‡

It has been observed by an authority of much weight:—"No period of Anglo-Saxon history was more glorious, or is less known, than the reign of Athelstan; a few simple notices in the Saxon Chronicle, and the old poem which Malmesbury somewhat contemptuously follows, alone remaining, *with the exception of the Great King's Laws*, to throw a scanty light upon the events of this epoch.§

But the belief may nevertheless be permissible, that the name of Athelstan, by virtue of his laws and charters, became a favourite one, as a legendary Guild patron.

Next to be remembered is the fact that Edward I. had the different religious houses twice searched for legends,|| also that a flood of documentary evidence relating to the various brotherhoods must have resulted from the legislation of the parliament of Cambridge in 1389.¶

It sometimes happened that one Guild after another copied the ordinances of an older Guild, and an instance of this is given by Mr. Smith in his collection.**

Similarly, the Old Charges were copied and multiplied in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and doubtless far earlier. Lastly, I must invite special attention to the various Statutes of Labourers,†† and although it is unlikely that any of my readers will be induced thereby to turn to these venerable enactments, the duty is nevertheless incumbent upon me to point out their importance, not only in the general inquiry, but also in that part of it at which we have now arrived.

I shall now seek to maintain the affirmative of the two propositions before enunciated, or, in other words, to show that the Regius MS. points to the existence of a symbolical or speculative Masonry, at the date from which it speaks.

The last hundred lines of the Masonic Poem are almost exactly the same as the poem "Urbanitatis," a facsimile of which is given in the present volume. The latter consists of minute directions for behaviour—in the presence of a lord—at table—and among ladies. The text of "Urbanitatis" has been printed in the "Babees Book"‡‡ as part of a volume on Manners and Meals in Olden Time, edited by Mr. Furnival, who, in describing it says:—"The persons to whom the first poems of the present collection are addressed, the

yonge Babees, whome bloode Royalle
Withe grace, feture, and hye habylitie
Hathæ enourmyd,

"the 'Bele Babees' and 'Swete Children,' may be likened to the 'young gentylnen, Henxmen,—vi. Enfauntes, or more, as it shall please the King,'—at Edward the Fourth's Court; and the authors or translators of the Bokes in this volume, somewhat to that Sovereign's Maistyr of Henxmen, whose duty it was,

to shew the schooles [scholars ?] of urbanitie and nourtur of England, to lerne them to ryde clenely and surely; to drawe them also to justes; to lerne them were theyre harneys; to haue all curtesy in wordes, dedes, and degrees; dilygently to kepe them in rules of goynges and sittings, after they be of honour. Moreover to teche them sondry languages, and other lerninges vertuuous, to harping, to pype, sing, daunce, and with other honest and temperate behaviour and patience; and to kepe dayly and wekely with these children dew convenity, with corrections in theyre chambres, according to suche gentylnen; and eche of them to be used to that thinge of vertue that he shall be moste apt to lerne, with remembraunce dayly of Goddes servyce accustomed. This maistyr sitteth in the halle, next unto those Henxmen, at the same boarde, to have his respecte unto theyr communicatiou and other formes curiall, after *the booke of urbanitie*.

"That these young Henxmen were *gentlemen*, is expressly stated. Thomas Howard, eldest son of Sir John Howard, Knight, was among these henchmen or pages, 'enfauntes'

* Mr. Richard Sims, in the *Mas. Mag.*, ii., 258.

† *Ante*, 37. ‡ *Ibid.*, 44, *et seqq.*; Kemble *Cod. Dipl. Ævi Sax.* ii., *passim.* § Robertson ii., 397.

|| *Ante*, 59. ¶ *Ibid.*, 37.

** *Eng. Gilds*, 272.

†† *Proleg.* 13.

‡‡ E.E.T.S., xxxii., 13-15.

six or more, of Edward iv's. He was made Duke of Norfolk for his splendid victory over the Scots at Flodden, and Anne Boleyn and Catharine Howard were his grand-daughters."*

On a later page of his "Forewords," Mr. Furnival adds—" *Vrbanitatis*, I was glad to find, because of the mention of *the booke of urbanitie* in Edward the Fourth's 'Liber Niger,' as we thus know what the Duke of Norfolk of 'Flodden Field' was taught in his youth as to his demeanings, how mannerly he should eat and drink, and as to his communication and other forms of court. He was not to spit nor snite before his Lord the King, or wipe his nose on the table-cloth."†

The passage referred to will be found on the *facsimile* of *Urbanitatis*‡ (*ll.* 53, 54), and is thus given in the Regius MS. (*ll.* 743-46)—

Kepe thyn hondes, fayr and wel,
From fowle smogyng of thy towel;
Theron thou schalt not thy nese snyte,
Ny at the mete thy tothe thou pyke;

These rules of decorum read very curiously in the present age, but their inapplicability to the circumstances of the working masons in the fourteenth or fifteenth century will be at once apparent. They were intended for *gentlemen* of those days, and the instructions for behaviour in the presence of a lord—at table—and in the society of ladies—would all have been equally out of place in a code of manners drawn up for the use of a Guild or Craft of artisans.

A similar sense of the incongruity of the text of the Regius MS. with what we feel must have been the actual customs of the building trades, cannot but steal over us when perusing *Articulus Quartus*, where we meet with—*ll.* 143-46—

By olde tyme wryten y fynde
That the prentes schulde be of gentyl kynde;
And so sumt me grete lordys blod
Toke thys gemetry, that is ful good.

Upon the foregoing, Mr. Furnival remarks, and the wish to which he gives expression, will, I am sure, be echoed by the readers of this Commentary—"I should like to see the evidence of a lord's son having become a working mason, and dwelling seven years with his master 'hys craft to lurne.'"§

The conclusion, therefore, to which, as it seems to me, we are directed by the evidence, is that the persons to whom the text of the Regius MS. was sung or recited, were a Guild or fraternity from whom all but the memory or tradition of its ancient trade had departed.

It is true indeed, that originally the Craft Guilds were composed of persons following special trades, and by the stat. 37 Edward III., c. v., it was ordained, "That all artificers and people of mysteries shall each choose his own mystery before the next Candlemas; and that having chosen it, he shall henceforth use no other; and that justices shall be assigned to inquire by process of *Oyer and Terminer*, and to punish trespassers by six month's imprisonment, or other penalty, according to the offence."

But in the same reign we find two earls and a bishop among the eminent members of the Merchant Taylors' Company, and in that of Richard II.—who himself became a brother in it—four royal dukes, ten earls, ten barons, and five bishops. After this, numerous great persons, both clergy and laity, as well as principal citizens, dazzled with the splendour of such associates, hastened to become enrolled as tradesmen in the fraternities.||

Of the Merchant Taylors' Company, indeed, its most recent historian tells us:—

"It would appear from the earliest existing record of admissions (1399-1400), that persons with occupations other than those of Merchant Taylors or Linen Armourers were admitted into the Guild. Thus of the thirty-five persons whose names are entered as "confrers" paying 20s. (then a large sum), we find a chevalier, a brewer, a tallow chandler, a vintner, a barbour, esquires, a parson, a sherman, a taverner, a grocer, a dyer, and a chaundler, the followers of which occupations should have been associated with the several Guilds of the same name."¶

From some cause or other, then, upon which, in the absence of further evidence, we can only speculate without arriving at any definite conclusion—though the materials to exercise our judgment upon are not wholly wanting—it would appear that at the date from which the Regius MS. speaks, there was a guild or fraternity commemorating the science

* E.E.T.S., xxxii., 2, 3.

† *Ibid.*, lxxviii.

‡ The form of the poem is supposed to have been transcribed about 1400. § E.E.T.S., xxxii., xlviiii.

|| Herbert, i., 29.

¶ Clode, *Early History of the Guild of Merchant Taylors*, 197, 198.

but without practising the art, of Masonry. There are two further allusions in the poem, which seem to me to bear in the direction, and are possibly a survival of, a very early feature of Guild life. They occur at lines 42, 352, and 361. In the two former, the injunction is to live together,

"As thawgh they were syster and brother,"

and in the latter to make punctual payments

"To mon or to wommon."

These are suggestive of female membership, and among other unsatisfied doubts, to which a minute scrutiny of the poem may give rise, it is possible that by some readers the passages in question may be held to point rather to the absorption of the Craft Legend by a social guild, than to a gradual transition from operative to speculative or symbolical Masonry, by a craft or fraternity composed in the first instance of members of the building art.

THE ARTICLES AND POINTS.

THE Rev. A. F. A. Woodford asks (in the last notes on any Masonic subject that I received from him), 1.—"What is the relation of this poetic legend to the others? As Cooke's MS. is now held to be synchronous with the poem, we can no longer see in the latter a transition from poetry to prose, but must hold that the poetic came from a rhythmic and Cooke's from a prose *original*."

2—"Can the Articles and Points in the poem be said to be the germ of the later ones, even including Cooke's, as the *poetic* must have been the precursor of the *prose* form? Yes, that is assuredly so.

"If, for instance, you take the poem, and place it side by side with the Dowland, Antiquity, and other MSS., you will find all the *general* charges—and no doubt the particular ones too, previously set out, in almost identical words—in the poem."

"This fact," continues Woodford, "would be realized more fully, if the older and quainter language of the poem were put into more modern verbiage"—which I shall proceed to do, though it may be at once stated that the result will not bear out—at all events in my own judgment, as the readers of this Commentary will be already aware—the somewhat confident prediction of the worthy brother, now deceased. His opinions, however, on all branches of our antiquities, are entitled to so much weight, that I gladly work in the groove he has marked out, with the certainty of thereby deriving great benefit in my task, which if diligently and critically performed, would have been equally welcomed by the scholar and antiquary whose loss we deplore, whether it tended to support or to refute any pre-conceived views of his own.

In the following summaries of the Articles and Points (*ll.* 87-470), by the use of Arabic and Roman numerals respectively, any confusion that might otherwise result from the subsequent references to either, will, it is hoped, be avoided.

The cases where similarities will be found in the German Ordinances, are distinguished by the letters A, B, and C, within parentheses, which denote the codes of 1459, 1462, and 1563 respectively.

FIFTEEN ARTICLES FOR THE MASTER.

1.—He must be steadfast, trusty, and true; pay his fellows truly; take no bribe; and as a "Jugge" stand upright (C).

2.—Every Master (that is a Mason) must be at the general congregation, provided he be told where the Assembly shall be held; except he have a reasonable excuse; is disobedient to the Craft; is with falsehood overtaken; or sickness disable him from attendance.

3.—The Master must take no apprentice, without good assurance he will dwell seven years with him, in order to learn his craft, as within a less period his service might be unprofitable (A, B, C).

4.—The Master must be careful not to make a bondsman his apprentice, or to take him out of covetousness, as the lord he is bound to may fetch him wheresoever he goes, and if captured in the Lodge* much inconvenience might result, since all the Masons that were there would stand together as companions. For more ease, then, the apprentice taken should be of higher degree, and it was in old time written that he should be of gentle birth† (A B.),

* Mr. Halliwell remarks, "It is curious to observe that the same term, *lodge*, is still in universal use among the masons. See also the *third point* for the enjoinder of secrecy at whatever was done at the lodges, which exactly corresponds with the present custom."—*Poem*, 2nd edit., 17.

† See *ante*, 68.

5.—The Apprentice must be of lawful blood, and the Master shall for no advantage make one that is not perfect, which means that he must have his limbs whole, for—

“ To the Craft it were great shame,
To make a halt man and a lame.
A maimed man he hath no might,
You may it know long ere night ” (A, B).

6.—The Master shall do the lord no prejudice, to take of him for his apprentice as much as for the fellows, who in their Craft are quite perfect, which he is not. But the apprentice shall be informed that his pay may soon increase.

“ And ere his term come to an end,
His hire may full well amend.”*

7.—No Master, out of fear or favour, shall either clothe or feed a thief, neither shall he harbour thieves, nor him that hath killed a man :

“ Ny thylke that hath a febul name,
Lest it would turn the Craft to shame.” (C).

8.—The Master may change any man of Craft, who is not so perfect as he ought to be, and take in his place a more perfect, that is, skilled man, as the former, through recklessness, might do the craft little honour (C).

9.—The Master ought to be wise and discreet, and should undertake no work that he cannot both perform and complete. Also it should be equally to the profit of the lord and the Craft, while the ground ought to be well taken, so that it may neither “ fle ” nor crack (A, B, C).

10.—No Master shall supplant another, or any other man that hath taken a work upon him, under a penalty of not less than ten pounds (on being found guilty) to him who first took the work in hand. For no man in Masonry shall supplant another, except the execution be such that it turn the work to naught, in which case only,

“ Then may a Mason that work crave
To the lord's profit it for to save,”

for the man who begins a work, if “ he be a Mason good and sound,” has the right to bring it to an end (A, B, C).

11.—The Master shall be both fair and liberal, and must prohibit any Mason from working at night, unless in the pursuit of knowledge, which shall be a sufficient excuse.

12.—No Mason shall deprave his fellow's work, but recommend it with honest words, and assist him in improving it (A, B, C).

13.—If the Master have an apprentice, he must instruct him fully in all points, so that he may have fully learned his craft, whithersoever he may go (B).

14.—A Master shall take no apprentice without making proper provision that he shall learn of him, within his term of servitude, “ divers points ” (B).

15.—The Master shall take upon himself no false maintenance, nor for any reward maintain his fellows in their sin. Neither must he suffer them to swear any false oaths (C).

FIFTEEN POINTS FOR THE CRAFTSMAN.

I.—The worthy Craftsman must love well God and the holy Church, the Master he is with, and his fellows also (A, B, C).

II.—The Mason must work truly on the work day, so as to deserve his pay for the holyday.

III.—The apprentice must keep his Master's counsel, and also that of his fellows, closely. The privities (*prevetyse*) of the chamber, he must not lay bare, nor tell to any man, whatsoever he hears, or sees done, in the Lodge. The counsel of hall and likewise of bower he must also keep inviolably (B).

IV.—No man shall be false to his Craft, or maintain any error against it, neither shall he do any act to the prejudice of his Master or fellows. The same injunctions apply to the apprentice, though “ under awe ” (B, C).

V.—The Mason must take the pay ordered to him weekly, but the Master, before the ninth hour—*i.e.*, 3 p.m.—must warn those for whom he hath no further employment, and to this direction they must submit without strife (A, B, C).

VI.—Love-day shall only be celebrated on a holiday, or when the work-day has come to an end (B, C).

VII.—No man shall lie with his Master's wife, or with the wife or concubine of any of his fellows—

“ The ponalty thereof let it be sure
That he be prentice full seven year ” (A, B, C).

† *i.e.*, become larger in amount.

VIII.—The Mason must be faithful to his Master ; a true mediator between his Master and his fellows ; and to act fairly by both parties (c).

IX.—The Stewards of the Hall are lovingly to serve each one the others ; to see that every man is charged alike ; to pay for all victuals consumed ; and to keep good and full accounts.

X.—If a Mason lead a bad life, and slander his fellows without cause, he shall be cited to appear at the next Assembly, and unless he attend must forswear the Craft, and shall be punished according to the law established in old days (A, B, C).

XI.—A Mason who is well skilled in the craft, and sees his fellow hewing a stone, which he is in a fair way to spoil, should help him without loss of time, if able so to do, and also instruct him how to do better, so that the whole work be not ruined (A, B, C).

XII.—At the Assembly there shall be, besides the Masters and fellows, many great Lords, the Sheriff of the County, the Mayor of the City, Knights, Squires, and Aldermen. The Ordinances then made shall be put into effect by them against any man belonging to the Craft, who, if he dispute the laws so enacted, will be taken into their keeping.

XIII.—Each Mason shall swear not to be a thief, nor to succour anyone in his false craft (c).

XIV.—Each Mason must swear a good true oath to his Master and fellows present at the Assembly. He must also be steadfast and true to all the ordinances ; to his liege lord the King ; and to all the points herebefore cited. All shall swear the same oath of the Masons, be they willing or unwilling, to these Points that have been ordained by good authority. And if any man be found guilty in either one of them, he is to be sought for and brought before the Assembly (A, B).

XV.—Should those that shall be sworn to observe the ordinances made at the Assembly before the great Lords and Masters before named, be disobedient to the resolutions there passed, and the same be proved openly at the Assembly—except they be willing to make amends for their faults, then must they forsake the craft, refuse to work in it, and swear never more to use it. Nor unless they subsequently make amends will they be allowed to resume their craft ; and if they will not do so, the Sheriff shall arrest them and put their bodies into prison, and take their goods and chattels, holding themselves and their property at the King's will (A, B).

Of the Fifteen Articles, 1-5 appear to have their analogues in the various Orders and Regulations with which we meet in the Old Charges. Art 6, however, I do not find in them ; 7 is expanded in the Cooke M.S., and also particularly referred to in what Dr. Begemann classifies as the *fourth* (or Spencer) " Family " ; 8 is not found in the prose forms ; 9 and 10 are substantially given ; 11 is not ; neither are 12 [see, however, the Hope M.S.]* ; 13 ; 14 [see Antiquity MS.]† or 15.

Art. 2 will be more fully considered under *Punctus duodecimus* (*ll.*, 407-20), in which place I shall deal with all the features of the poem, that are connected either directly or remotely with the problem of the " Assembly." The rule enjoining that apprentices must be free-born (4, 5 ; *ll.*, 129, 150) was an imperative one, and even after a person was made free of the Guild and the city, if it became known that he was of servile condition, he lost his freedom.‡

Two of the qualifications required in the Master (9 ; *l.* 194) find a close analogy in the regulations of the Guild of St. Anthony, Lynn, Norfolk, which enjoins that the Alderman must be " *wyse and willye*, able and konyng to reulen and gouern ye company, to ye worchep of God an holy chirche."§

Articles 11-15 (*ll.*, 225-60), though not incorporated specifically, and indeed only to a very limited extent inferentially, in the Old Charges, are nevertheless amply borne out by usages of the various trades, together with many rules and minutes of the early Lodges, that have escaped the almost general destruction of such documents. Thus, the prohibition against working at night (11 ; *l.* 227) appears to have been common to all trades, with the solitary exception of the undertakers, who were allowed in France—and doubtless elsewhere—to carry on their dismal calling at all hours.||

The due instruction of the apprentice by his master (13 ; *l.* 243), or some competent deputy of the latter, would seem to go without saying, as the phrase is, but the custom is so quaintly expressed in the records of the Craft Guild of the Tailors, at Exeter (*temp.* Edw. iv.), that I shall here introduce the form of oath in which it appears :—" Ye shall

* O.C. 62, ix.

† *Ibid* 68, iv.

‡ *Hist.* ii., 344 ; Stow, 328 ; Riley, *Memorials*, 23, 58 ; and *Eng. Gilds*, cxxxix.

§ *Eng. Gilds*, 46.

|| *Hist.* i., 191, 198.

swere that ye shall well and trewly behave yo'selfe, in abellyng of this person in alle soche connyng as longith to the Crafte of Taylors that cometh to yo mende, and in all soche konnyng as ye fynde hym able to show on-to the Master and Wardens ; and that ye schall not lett, for lone, favor, frendsheppe, or any other hatered, nother malesye of no person : so God yow helpe and holydom, and by this boke."*

"Once a use and ever a custom," as the old proverb has it, and of this a good illustration will be found in the practice of the early Scottish Lodges, under which the system of assigning "intenders" to perfect the apprentices for their future trials, was no doubt a survival of the old custom (or law), noticed in the Regius MS. and the Exeter Records, that now-comers were to be "abelled" or in other words taught all the skill of the craft.

The last "Article" (15 ; ll. 251-60), may be usefully compared with the 10th "Order" of the Alnwick Lodge, enacted in 1701.†

It is stated by Herbert, of the "Companies of London"—"Their Government was by ordinances or by-laws, framed by common assent amongst themselves
THE POINTS. and which were anciently called POINTZ. They chiefly regarded the qualifications of members ; keeping of their Trade Secrets ; the regulation of apprenticeships," etc.‡

TERCIUS PUNCTUS (ll. 275-86).

Of the term "Lodge" (*logge*, l. 280, and *ante* Art. 4) Mr. Wyatt Papworth observes :— "In 1200, the words 'tabulatum domicialem,' as the shed in front of St. Alban's Abbey Church, whilst it was being rebuilt, was called, may probably be an early intimation of such a building. If not, the entry, 1321, of 2s. 6d. for *straw* to cover the mason's lodging, at the building of Caernarvon Castle, may perhaps be accepted. In 1330, a man at St. Stephen's Chapel, Westminster, had, amongst his other work, to clean out the Lodge."§ The Fabric Rolls of York Minster, published by Canon Raine for the Surtees Society, show that in 1352—or according to a previous authority, 1355||—the following orders were enacted :—"The first and second masons, who are called masters of the same (*principalis et secundarius cementarius, qui vocantur magistri eorumdem*), and the carpenters shall make oath that they cause the ancient customs under-written to be faithfully observed. In summer, they are to begin to work immediately after sunrise until the ringing of the bell of the Virgin Mary, then to breakfast in the fabric lodge (*logium fabricae*), then one of the masters shall knock upon the door of the lodge, and forthwith all are to return to work until noon. Between April and August, after dinner, they shall sleep in the lodge, then work until the first bell for vespers. Then sit to drink till the end of the third bell, and return to work so long as they can see by daylight. In winter, they are to begin work at daybreak and continue as before till noon—dine, and return to work till daylight is over. On Vigils and on Saturdays they are to work until noon."¶

These rules continued in force until 1370, when they were superseded by others of a like character, but expressed in the vernacular idiom. The duties to be performed in the "loge" remained very much the same as before, and the regulations conclude—"Ande, als wa, it es ordayned yt na masonn sall be receavyde atte wyrke, to ye werk of ye forsayde kyrke, bot he be firste provede a weke or mare upon his well wyrking ; and, aftyr yt he es foundyn souffissant of his werke, be receavyde of ye commune assente of ye mayster and ye keepers of ye werk, ande of ye maystyr masonn, and swere upon ye boke yt he sall trewly ande bysyli at his power, for oute any maner gylry, fayntys, outhr desayte, hald and kepe haly all ye poyntes of yis forsayde ordinance,"** etc.

On the 31st of October, 1370, Master Robert de Patrington, and twelve other masons, came before the chapter, and swore to observe the foregoing rules, in the following terms : 'Lordes, if it be your wyles, we grant for to stand at our werkes truly at our power,'†† etc.

We learn from the same Fabric Rolls, that there was a duly appointed pledge-day (*pleghday*), when the workmen swore to observe the orders which the Chapter had ordained for their management. This they were required to do at least once a year.‡‡

The York Fabric Rolls show clearly enough what the Masons had to do when in Lodge, and it has been well observed, "that the 'orders' supplied to the Masons at work at York Cathedral in 1352-55, give but a poor notion of there being then existing in that city anything like a gild or fellowship claiming authority in virtue of a charter, supposed to have been given to it by Athelstan in 926, not only over that city but over all England."§§

* *Eng. Gilda*, 319.

† *Hist.* ii., 263.

‡ Herbert, i., 45.

§ *Notes on the Superintendents of English Buildings in the Middle Ages*.—*Trans. R.I.B.A.* iii., n.s. 220.

|| *Browne, Hist of York Cathedral* (1838-47), 134. ¶ *Surtees Soc. Pub.*, xxxv (1859), 171.

** *Ibid.*, 182.

†† *Ibid.*, 181.

‡‡ *Ibid.*, 11.

§§ *Papworth*, 225.

There is nothing, indeed, in the records from which I have quoted, to indicate that the Lodge at York, in the 14th century, was used for any other than strictly trade purposes, by the operative Mason of that period; and as each of our great Cathedrals, in those early times, had a gang of workmen attached to it in regular pay,* the point is not without significance, for if the existence of any form of speculative Masonry can be carried to a greater altitude than the 14th century, the evidence to support it must be looked for among the records and Fabric Rolls of the past—from which alone any light is now likely to be shed upon the inner life of the bodies of skilled workmen, who were banded together for long periods by the tie of common employment in the plastic art.

In Mr. Smith's collection—among the ordinances—will be found a large number of entries, which impose a penalty for betraying the counsel of the Guild to any strange man or woman.† “The preserving of their trade secrets,” says Herbert, “was a primary ordination of all the fraternities, and continued their leading law as long as they remained actual ‘working companies,’ whence arose the name of ‘mysteries,’ and ‘crafts’ by which they were for so many ages, and are still occasionally designated.”‡ The grocers' ordinances of 1463 contained a special article against “discovering the secrets of the craft,” and art. 16 of the Merchant Tailors' ordinances, 1603, ordains “That no person of the fraternity shall discover or disclose any of the lawfull secrecies concerning the feates of merchandizing.”§ There is no reason to suppose that anything more than trade secrets are alluded to in *tercius punctus* of the poem, or that the words “hall” and “bower” (l. 283) veil an esoteric meaning, though at a much later date we certainly meet with the former of these two expressions, under circumstances from which a contrary opinion may be inferred.||

The injunction in *SEPTIMUS PUNCTUS* (l. 328) which recognizes the keeping of concubines by apprentices and fellows, is quite *sui generis*, and nothing at all like it is to be found either in the Old Charges, or in the ordinances of the Steinmetzen, though the practice was then a common one in ordinary life, and consistent with the turn of manners at that time prevailing. Line 328 of the poem has been a fruitful source of speculation to those who have written on the manners of our fourteenth and fifteenth century ancestors, but the explanation must be sought, I think, in the actual composition of the Guild or fraternity to whose members the various charges were addressed.¶

END OF PART I. COMMENTARY.

[AD EXPLICATIONEM PERTINENS.]

L'homme propose et Dieu dispose—during the preparation of the letter-press which I had promised to supply for this volume, the views of the committee on reprints underwent a slight modification with regard to some of the details intrusted by the Lodge to their management. Thus, instead of publishing the Cooke MS. in a second, and the Old Charger (or Manuscript Constitutions) in a third volume, each with a separate introduction, it has been deemed preferable, as the prose versions of the Craft Legend will be given in our next publications, to make the commentary on the poem serve the purpose of a general introduction to the common features by which they are distinguished. In consequence of this resolution the second digression has assumed a wider scope than was originally intended, and in order to divide, if possible, the introductory and explanatory matter for Volumes I. and II. into moieties of fairly equal length, the point we have reached above is deemed the most convenient one at which to make a break in the Commentary, the second part of which—together with the promised Dissertation—will therefore be given in another issue of our Reprints.

In resuming the Commentary, the remaining “Points” in the poem will be considered in a Third Digression, where, *inter alia*, an attempt will be made to explain what the “Assembly” really was at which the Masons were required to be present, and incidentally therewith to suggest a probable solution of the well-known clause in the Old Charges, which renders imperative, at the gathering in question, the presence of all members of the Craft within a prescribed distance.

* Scott, *Gleanings from Westminster Abbey*. † *Eng. Gilds*, 65, 67, 69, 76, 81, 92, and 98.

‡ *Companies of London*, i., 45. Madox (*Firma Burgi*) derives the custom of calling the companies “mysteries” from the French, who, he says, using the word “*mestiere*” for a craft, art, or employment, the name came to be used here in a similar sense. In a Venetian Statute (dated 1519) mention is made of the crafts or trades in that city, by the name of *misteri*. The term “mystery,” we see, was applied to the trade guilds by the charter of Edw. III., and it certainly continued so for ages afterwards.—*Ibid.*

§ *Ibid.*, 46.

|| *A Mason's Examination*, 1723; and *A Mason's Confession*, 1727.—*Hist.* ii., 357; iii., 488; and *Scot's Mag.*, xvii. (1755), 133-37.

¶ *Ante*, 68, 69.

ARS QUATUOR CORONATORUM (ll. 497-528), as well as the fifth (ll. 577-692), and sixth (ll. 693-794) divisions of the poem,* will also be examined at some length.

Urbanitatis has already been twice referred to,† and in this place, therefore, it will be sufficient to add that the extract given in the Regius MS. (ll. 693-794), and the corresponding verses of which a facsimile appears in the present volume, were believed by Woodford to have had "a common origin, probably some Norman, French, or even Latin poem."‡ My personal view of this question must, however, be deferred, and I pass to the "Instructions for a Parish Priest," the remaining facsimile, of which a brief description is essential.

This poem has been preserved in at least three manuscripts, and what is deemed the earliest and purest text, was printed in 1868, the date assigned to it by the editor, Mr. Peacock, being the year 1450.§

The age of the Regius MS. has been variously estimated, some authorities going back to the close of the fourteenth century, while, as we have already seen, a later date has been ascribed to it by Mr. Bond.|| This point, however, like several others, will again come before us, and I shall here merely introduce, for the purposes of comparison, typical facsimiles of handwriting of both periods above referred to.

for to haue writtyn þis þe writtene day
of þe money adar. þis seid bi voyce of
hise þe first day of mardochius / þfore
þese þingis don azeim' mychanore.

[From Wycliffe's Bible, late 14th century. Brit. Mus. Addl. MS. 15580.]

H]is noble and myghty Prince excellent
my lord, the Prince. o my lord, gracious
I humble seruant, and obedient
By to your estate his and glorious

[From a Poem written about 1411 or 1412. Brit. Mus. Arundel MS. 38.]

I now pass to the DISSERTATION ON THE GORMOGONS, which, as originally contemplated, was to stand in the same relation to the remaining reprints, as the COMMENTARY towards "Urbanitatis" and the "Instructions for a Parish Priest." But as the DISSERTATION must be reserved for a future volume, while the Reprints that fall within its scope will be given in the present one, a few details with regard to these ancient publications may be of assistance to the reader.

1st—The 51st number of the *Plain Dealer*, September 14, 1724, contains an article on the Gormogons, portions of which were reproduced in the *Grand Mystery*, 2nd edit., 1725. 2nd—The original of *An Ode to the Grand Khaibar*, 1726, is in the library of the Quatuor Coronati Lodge, and if there are other copies in existence, I am quite unable to indicate the custody in which they may be found. 3rd—The publication of *The Defence of Masonry* was announced in the *Daily Journal*, December, 16th, 1730, but the earliest known copy of the pamphlet is given in the *Freemason's Pocket Companion* for 1738, from which the present Reprint is an extract. 4th—*Euclid's Letter* appeared in the *New Book of Constitutions*, 1738, and was printed immediately after the *Defence of Masonry*, which also found a place in that publication.

* *Ante*, 17. † *Ante*, 17, 63. ‡ *Mas. Mag.*, ii., 163. § *E.E.T.S.*, xxxi. || *Proleg.*, 4.

ADDENDA.

PROLEGOMENA.

5. 2nd paragraph up—*distinctively operative stamp*. The opinion here expressed will be found materially qualified at the close of the second digression, but as each sheet passed through the press, the type was distributed, and therefore in all cases where variances of a similar character are met with, I shall ask the reader to regard the statements or conclusions, *latest in point of actual writing*, and therefore the result of the longest amount of study and reflection, as being presumably the most entitled to his confidence.
7. 5th paragraph. The charge, *to be liegeman to the King of England*, would have been here inserted had I realized its importance at this early stage of the inquiry.
8. The 'Calendar' of the "Old Charges." To the documents mentioned, should be added at the No. 21a, the T. W. Tew MS.—*date*, 17th century—*custody*, West Yorkshire Masonic Library—*published*, in the Christmas number of the *Freemason*, 1888, and separately, by Hughan.

COMMENTARY.

- pp. 37, 62, 65. System of Frankpledge.—Sir Francis Palgrave says:—"When the view of Frankpledge was held, the members of each decennary took the oath of allegiance, in which they swore that they would be faithful and true to the king and his heirs, and bear him faith and loyalty of life and limb and worldly honour, and defend him against all his enemies. This was the oath which the Conqueror imposed upon all his subjects who were free, that is to say, not in Theowet or slavery."^{*}
- p. 44, *et seqq.* The Ripon and Beverley Charters were taken by me from Dugdale's *Monasticon*, and Kemble's *Codex Diplomaticus*. About five hundred and eighty six Charters were published in the latter work, but in the *Cartularium Saxonicum* of Mr. Birch, which has only just fallen in my way, there are incorporated with the foregoing, two hundred and sixty eight additional documents, thus making a grand total of eight hundred and fifty-nine Charters, and various forms of those instruments. Fourteen Charters are classified by Mr. Birch as "Metrical or Quasi-Metrical Pieces," but of these only nine are rythmical or alliterative throughout. Nos. 644 and 645 are the two versions of the Beverley Charter, as given in Lansdowne MS. 269; and by Kemble and Thorpe—following Dugdale—respectively: 647, in the Ripon Charter (*ante* 44): 655, a Latin Hymn in praise of King Athelstan's subjugation of Constantine, king of Scots, and the kings of Britain, A.D. 626: 686, an Anglo-Saxon Poem on the Site of Durham, connected with a grant by Athelstan to St. Cuthbert's Cathedral, Durham, *about* A.D. 931: 710, a Poem relating to the presentation of a MS. of the four Gospels by Athelstan to Christ Church, Canterbury, *after* A.D. 936: 751, is a Poetical Grant of Land, partly metrical, partly alliterative, in Latin, by king Edmund, A.D. 940: 815, is a Poetical Grant, also in Latin, by king Edred: and 859—derived from the Duchy of Lancaster Records—is another form of, and almost identical with, the Ripon Charter, No. 647.

It will be seen, therefore, that out of these nine Charters, seven are connected with king Athelstan, and his name also figures far more conspicuously as a grantor of Charters in a general way, than that of any other Anglo-Saxon monarch whose acts of the kind are recorded in the *Cartularium Saxonicum*.

Mr. Birch observes—with regard to the genuineness of certain documents included in his collection:—"Setting aside for the moment those which are glaringly fictitious, there are many which, in their present form, are not true texts of original documents, for these originals have no doubt perished in some of the frequent calamities which are so graphically described in many an ancient chronicle. But looking on them with the light that many other genuine deeds of this period afford, we cannot but be led to the conclusion that, although they are not copies, *they are reconstructions of genuine documents*, couched in terms differing for the most part widely from the language of the original. It is not unlikely that these late and spurious forms were set up when necessity arose for the existence and production of the muniments and charters which alone could confer upon the

* *Eng. Com.* i., 201, citing *Fleta*, iii., 16; and the *Mirror*, 2, 9.

cathedral, the abbey, or the private person, the rights of possession and the privileges long and usefully, as well as legally and unquestionably, enjoyed by such corporation or individuals. Accepting this view, that these apparently false charters are neither originals nor copies of originals, but mere substitutes for originals; not fictitious in the sense of being false representations; nevertheless, recording real transactions, yet not in the terms in which the grants were originally made, we can easily understand how it is that they contain so many errors of language, history, and topography, and are so full of anachronisms.*

A document printed by Mr. Birch affords a good example of the practice of re-writing charters from a recollection of their contents. This deed is dated A.D. 903, and recites that Duke Ethelfrid having lost all his hereditary charters (*libri*) by fire, desires permission of King Edward and the rulers of the Mercians, to prepare other charters, "eodem modo quo et priores scripti erant in quantum eos *memoriter recordari potuisset*."†

But there was also another class of spurious charters which sprang into existence under somewhat different circumstances.

To use the words of Sir Francis Palgrave:—"Interest may have tempted the monks to commit forgery; and they did not always resist this temptation as resolutely as might be wished for the honour of their order. Yet in extenuation, if not in apology of this offence, it must be remembered that their falsifications were chiefly defensive. Lands which unquestionably belonged to the Church were frequently held merely by prescriptive possession, unaccompanied by deeds and charters. The right was lawful, but there were no lawful means of proving the right. And when the monastery was troubled and impleaded by the Norman Justiciar, or the Soke invaded by the Norman Barons, the Abbot and his brethren would have recourse to the artifice of *inventing a charter* for the purpose of protecting property; which, however lawfully acquired and honestly enjoyed, was like to be wrested from them by the captious niceties of the Norman jurisprudence, or the greedy tyranny of the Norman sword."‡

Some very curious reasons for their being written are recited in certain charters. Thus, in an alleged grant by king Edmund, dated A.D. 940, we meet with the words, "Scripsimus novam cartulam quia antiquam non habebamus"; § and in similar instruments of A.D. 943 and 944, we find, "Scripsimus novam cartulam quia antiquum librum non habebamus."|| Many instances are given by Mr. Birch of Anglo-Saxon grants, with what are called "companion forms" in Latin and Old English. Sometimes an Anglo-Saxon original was translated into Latin, and *vice versa*, but the last stage of all appears to have been in most cases the vernacular tongue. Of the Beverley Charter we only possess the Old English form, but of that of Ripon, there exist the English and Latin forms respectively.

The following, of which the Ripon Charter already given (*ante* 44) is described as an "Early English Metrical Version"—is the Latin form alluded** to:—

646. *Grant of liberties, customs, and privileges, by king Adelstan to the Church and Chapter of Ripon. About A.D. 925.*

✱ In nomine sanctae et individuae trinitatis ADELSTANUS rex Dei Gratia regni Angliae omnibus hominibus suis Eboraci, et per totam Angliam salutem.

Sciatis quod ego confirmo ecclesiae et capitulo RIPONENSI pacem suam, et omnes libertates et consuetudines suas, et concedo eis curiam suam de omnibus quærelis et in omnibus curiis de hominibus S. Wilfridi, pro ipsis et hominibus suis, vel contra ipsos, vel inter se ad invicem, vel quae fieri p[ossint] per alios? et iudicium suum pro *Frodmortell*; et quod homines sint credendi per suum *ya*, et per suum *na*, et omnes suas terras habitas, et habendas, et homines suos ita liberos, quod nec rex Angliæ, nec ministri ejas, aliquid faciant vel habeant quod est ad terras suas vel ad socam capituli.

Testibus†† G. archiepiscopo Eboracensi, et P. praeposito Beverlaci.

It will be observed that the date assigned to the preceding instrument is A.D. 925, and the same is given to the Beverley Charter, in both cases on the authority of Dugdale, as recorded in his *Monasticon*.

* *Cart. Sax.*, i., xx. † *Ibid.*, ii., 258. ‡ *Eng. Com.*, ii., ccx. § *Cart. Sax.*, ii., 487
|| *Ibid.*, 529, 537. ¶ *Ibid.*, 325. ** *Ante*, 44.

†† Mr. Birch, from whose collection the above is an extract, observes, "The names may represent Geoffrey de Ludham, Archbishop of York, A.D. 1258; and Peter de Chester, Provost of Beverley, A.D. 1222."—*Cart. Sax.*, ii., 325.

The Ripon Metrical Charter is described in the work last quoted, by the title given in the text (*ante* 44), and then follow the words—"Ex antiquo Registro penes . . . Lindale, Sub-decanum Ecclesiae Ripponensis 1630."*

- pp. 45, 60. The Dunbar miracle.—The possibility of this fabulous exploit having been in the minds of those persons by whom the *laws* as well as the legend of the Craft, were first sung or recited, cannot be wholly excluded from our consideration. It is also worthy of reflection whether the placing by William the Lion, of his spear and shield on the altar of St. Peter at York—where they were for a long time preserved—as symbols of his submission to the English king (*ante* 57), may not have given the idea or suggestion underlying the alleged miracle a strong local colouring which, together with Edwin's foundation of the Minster and the various incidents connected with Athelstan's famous march against the Scots, have combined to render the old capital of the Deiri the traditionary centre of the *latest* items of Masonic history recited in the (prose) Legend of the Craft.
- p. 45. The battle of Brunanburh.—According to Mr. Birch, the term "Brunnan burh" is, "with little doubt, a poetical alliterative synonym for 'Bruninga feld,' " and he considers that the parish of Broomfield, in Somersetshire, satisfies, in many ways, the condition of the description in the Anglo-Saxon *Chronicle*.† The site of the great battle was recently the subject of much controversy in the *Athenæum*.‡
- p. 49. The grithmen of Beverley.—The employment in the English army of these out-laws, who were accustomed to celebrate the weekly obit of King Athelstan, must have given a wider circulation to the connection, legendary and otherwise, of that monarch with the shrine of St. John of Beverley.
- p. 53. The Earldom of Northumberland.—The king's representative in the north, continued to be a very powerful personage until much later times. Thus, Mr. Denton tells us:—"Whilst, at the end of the fifteenth century, the Duke of Buckingham was the wealthiest member of the peerage, the Earl of Northumberland was probably the most powerful of the nobility. The court at Alnwick came little behind the court at Windsor, and like others of the chief nobility, the representative of the house of Percy was waited upon 'both day and night,' not only by,

'Knights and squires as menial household men,'

but by barons entertained in fee as ordinary members of his retinue. Among his large possessions were at least five castles in Northumberland, nine in Yorkshire, and six in Cumberland, all surrounded by their attendant parks, chases, and warrens. From his retainers and tenants he was able to summon an army of the most warlike and restless spirits, drilled in constant military exercises by the perpetual strife which raged along the border lands of England and Scotland."§

- p. 55. Battle of the Standard.—The banners displayed on this occasion may be described in effect, as those of two dead bishops, and one living archbishop, of York.
- p. 58. The War of Independence.—It may, I think, be affirmed, that if the Legend of Masonry had not penetrated into modern Scotland before the death of Alexander III., there is little probability of its having been introduced into that kingdom during a long period of comparative anarchy which then ensued. This point, I shall hope the following note, which is abridged from the Rev. W. Denton's *England in the Fifteenth Century*, p. 67, *et seqq.*, may assist in making clear to the reader, and also that it may fortify some other contentions which lie scattered in the text, as well as suggest to the reflective student how it came to pass that the paths of English and Scottish Masonry have diverged.

At the close of the thirteenth century Scotland socially, ecclesiastically, and politically was, so far as the rights and privileges of the people were concerned, a part of England, and Scottish writers of that period speak of their own language as English.

But the victory of Bannockburn drove from Scotland the very elements of its growing civilization and its material wealth. The artizans of North Britain were at that time mostly English. These retired, or were driven from Scotland,

* *Mon. Angl.*, ii., 133.

† *Cart. Sax.*, ii., viii.

‡ July-Dec., 1885.

§ *England in the Fifteenth Century*, 267-69.

and with them the commercial importance of the Scottish towns was lost.* The estates held by Englishmen in Scotland were confiscated, and the wealth which through the hands of these proprietors had found its way from the southern parts of the kingdom and fertilized the more barren soil of the north, at once ceased.

The civilization of Scotland was not of home growth. The principles of its constitutional law had been implanted by the English, who before or at the time of the Norman Conquest settled in the countries beyond the Tweed. From the Tweed and Solway to the limits of Sutherland almost all the arable land was held by English families. With few and inconsiderable exceptions, every name of note occurring in Scottish history is English.

The settlers from England before the Norman Conquest influenced Scotland in many ways more deeply than even the Anglo-Norman barons settled there after the time of William the Norman, and Scotland retained the old English rule of government, and was less indebted than England to Anglo-Norman legislation. The forms of its early institutions were English, and were introduced into the northern kingdom during the reigns of David I. and the three Alexanders. The rules and practice of the Scottish Parliament were moulded upon those of South Britain; the laws of Scotland were copied from the statute roll of England.

Before the war with England municipal officers in Scotland bore the English names of mayor and aldermen; but these were afterwards exchanged for titles taken from French municipal institutions, and Scottish towns came to be governed by provosts or doyens, deans, and baillies.†

The cathedrals of the northern church were erected by the kings of Scotland avowedly in imitation of the cathedrals of England. In the same way, the great monasteries of Scotland received not only their rule but their first members also from England.

The relations of Scotland with England are evident in other things. The architecture of the cathedrals and monasteries of the north was derived from England, and, when not built by southern architects, was copied by Scottish architects mostly from the models to which the spirituality was indebted for the constitution of the chapter or the rules for the governance of the monastery.‡ No cathedral was built after the reign of David I. in 1153, and almost every monastery was founded before the death of Alexander III. in 1286. All these marks of refined taste and religious zeal, of wealth and public spirit, ceased with the rebellion of Bruce. The Anglo-Norman barons retired to their southern estates. The money necessary for building edifices of such grandeur suddenly failed, and additions made to these buildings after this date betray the influence of French, not of English, architecture.

p. 59. The Legend of Brutus, the Trojan.—It seems probable that the historical researches of Edward I. were conducted after the existing Craft Legend had assumed form and coherency. Otherwise, I think, from the wide circulation given to the fable of Brutus and his descendants, we should find some trace of it in the written traditions of Masonry.

p. 68. *Articulus Quartus. ll. 143-46.*

Mr. Halliwell observes:—"From l. 143, it would appear that the writer, who was a priest,§ had access to some documents concerning the history of the craft."|| But the interpolation of a series of verses having reference to the priestly office is no more conclusive of the profession or calling of the penman than the insertion of a poem on 'Manners and Meals'—from which it might equally be inferred that the writer was a 'Maistryr of Henxmen' (*Ante 67*).

* Berwick ranked next to London for its commerce. It is called by the *Lanercost Chronicle* "a second Alexandria." Its importance was destroyed by the war, and it never recovered. Inverness at the close of the thirteenth century was of greater importance than now.—Innes, *Scotland in the Middle Ages*, 232.

† Citing Burton's *History of Scotland*, ii., 180.

‡ The real golden age of Scotland—the time of peace with England—of plenty in the land, of foreign trade, of internal peace, of law and justice, was the period of a full century following the treaty between William the Lion and Richard Cœur de Lion (A.D. 1189), comprehending the reign of William, and the long reigns of the second and third Alexanders. That century is the time when we can ascertain most of our fine and great churches to have been built.—Innes, 296.

§ "This appears from l. 629, 'And when the gospel me rede schal'."—Halliwell, 41.

|| *Ibid.*

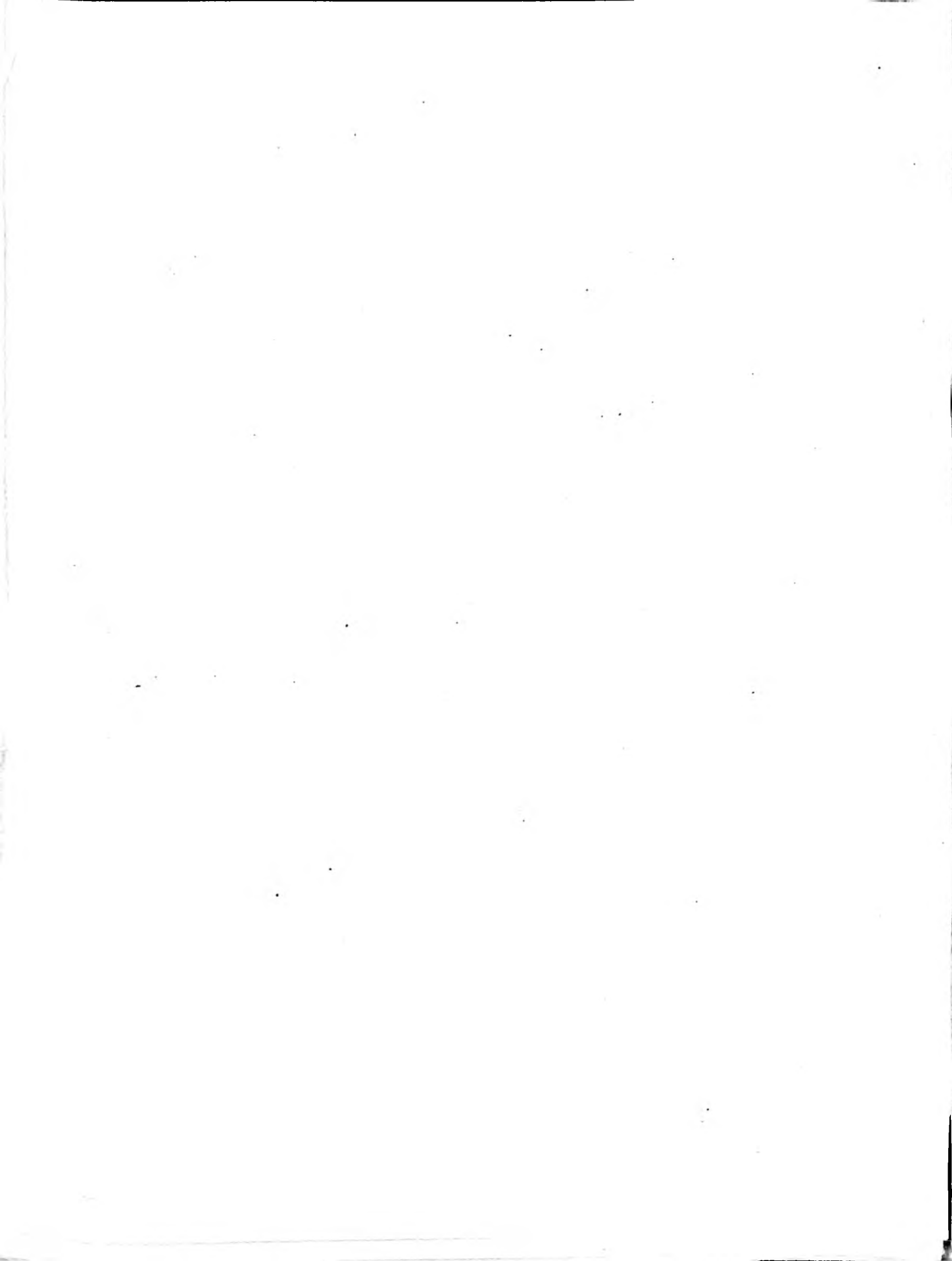
MAP III.



p. 68. That we have here, however, a distinct reference to some written form of the Craft Legend is apparent (*proleg. vi.*) although, as already stated, I do not think any such writing was actually utilised by the penman of the Regius MS. (*ante 34*).

It is worthy of our attention that both Mr. Halliwell and Mr. Furnivall (*ante 68*) were evidently unaware of the passages in the Masonic Poem relating to the duties of a priest, and to behaviour at meals respectively, having been transcribed from any other source. Thus, the remarks of the latter on *Urbanitatis*, betray no knowledge of his having recognised a form of that MS. in the Masonic Poem, and hence the doubts he casts on the alleged custom of young persons of family serving an apprenticeship to working masons, arise as it were spontaneously from the actual lines before him, and without any tinge or bias from the proof he elsewhere affords us, though indirectly, of a large portion of the Regius MS., having been derived from a code of manners drawn up for gentlemen.





III.

THE ASSEMBLY.

[*Ars, Quatuor Coronatorum*, 1892.]



THE ASSEMBLY.

[A. Q. C. 1892.]

Rather more than four years ago, my labours as a commentator on the Regius MS, were interrupted, and the following words were used by me at that time in taking leave of it:—

“ In resuming the Commentary, the remaining ‘ Points ’ in the poem will be considered in a Third Digression, where, *inter alia*, an attempt will be made to explain what the ‘ Assembly ’ really was at which the Masons were required to be present, and incidentally therewith to suggest a probable solution of the well-known clause in the Old Charges, which renders imperative, at the gathering in question, the presence of all members of the Craft within a prescribed distance.”*

The paper I have prepared for this evening will deal with the subject of the “ Assembly ” What this gathering really was, I may not, indeed, be able to show to your satisfaction, but if I merely succeed in enlarging the foundations upon which you can erect your own scaffolding, my chief object will have been attained.

“ Every fact won, every stage accomplished, becomes the starting point of fresh acquirement, of further progress which will ever be the glorious heritage of future generations.”†

The Assembly is pointedly referred to in the Regius‡ and Cooke§ MSS. and the Manuscript Constitutions.¶ The last-named were styled by Hughan the “ Old Charges,” and the title is in common vogue. But it has lately seemed to me rather a confusing one, as clashing with “ The Charges of a Free-Mason,” and “ The Old Charges of the Free and Accepted Masons,” printed by Dr. James Anderson in the first and second editions of his ‘ Book of Constitutions ’ respectively. Hence, after a lengthened use of the expression, I have reluctantly struck it out of my vocabulary—that is, as being among the *synonyma* by which to relieve the monotony of too frequent a reference to the “ Manuscript Constitutions.” I part from it with regret, and with an apology to our Bro. Hughan—whose “ Old Charges,” however, (or those which he so describes) I freely admit, have a far better claim to that title, than the garbled and falsified ‘ extracts ’¶ and “ collections ”** from Ancient Masonic Records given by Dr. Anderson in his two publications.

The allusions to the Assembly in the Regius and Cooke MSS. and the Manuscript Constitutions will be next given—those from the first-named at unavoidable length, owing to the edition of our reprints in which it appears having been long since exhausted.

THE REGIUS M.S.

In the proem of this ancient writing, at line 59, the scene suddenly shifts from Egypt, and we are told,

Mony erys afterwarde, y understonde,
3er that the craft com ynto thys londe.

It being in the “ tyme of Good Kynge Adelstonus,” of whom we next learn,
Thys goode lorde loved thys craft ful wel,
And purposud to strenthyn hyt every del,
For dyvers defawtys than yn the craft he fonde ;
He sende abut ynto the londe.
A semblé thenno he cowthe let make
Of dyvers lordis, yn here state,
Dukys, erlys, and barnes also,
Kny3 thys, sqwyers, and many mo,
And the grete burges of that syté,
These wore ther uchon algate,
To ordeyne for these masonus astate,

* Q.C.A., i., pt. iii., 54.

† Nadailac, *Pre-Historic America*, vii.

‡ Q.C.A., i.

§ *Ibid*, ii

¶ *Ibid*, iii.

¶ *Constitutions*, 1723.

** *Ibid*, 1738.

The result of their deliberation being, as announced in the two last lines of the proem, that 15 Articles and 15 Points were enacted. From these, the following are selections,—

Art. II.—That every mayster, that ys a mason,
Most ben at the generale congregacyon,
So that he hyt resonably y-tolde
Where that the semblé schal be holde ;
And to that semblé he most nede gon,
But that he have a resenabul skysacyon

Point 12.—The twelthe poynt ys of gret ryolté,
Ther as the semblé y-holde schal be,
There schul be maystrys and felows also,
And other grete lordes mony mo ;
There schal be the scheref of that contré,
And also the meyr of that syté,
Knyztes and sqwyers there schul be,
And other aldermen, as 3e schul se ;
Suche ordynance as they maken there,
They schul maynté hyt holy-feré,
A3eynus that mon, whatsoever he be,
That longuth to the craft bothe fayr and fre.
3ef he any stryf a3enus hem make,
Ynto here warde he schal be take.

Point xrv.—A goode trwe othe he most ther swere
To hys mayster and his felows that ben there ;
He most be stedefast and trwe also
To alle thys ordynance, whersever he go,
And to hys lyge lord the Kynge,
To be trwe to hym, over alle thyngé,
And alle schul swere the same ogth
Of the Masonus, ben they luf, ben they loght

Point xv.—The fyftethe poynt ys of ful good lore,
For hem that schul ben ther y-swore,
And 3ef they ben y-preved opunly,
Byfore that semblé, by an by,
And for here gultes no mendys wol make,
Thenne most they nede the craft forsake ;
And so masonus craft they schul refuse,
And swere hyt never more for to use.
And 3ef that they nul not do so,
The sheref schal come hem sone to,
And putte here bodyes yn duppe prison
For the trespasse that they hav y-don.

Quindecimus punctus, from which I have last quoted, terminates at line 470, and under the heading of *Alia ordinacio artis gemetricæ*, we are brought back in quite a dramatic way to the time of 'Kynge Adelston.'

Alia Ordinacio is followed by another digression, entitled *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum*, and my reason for referring to them will be made clearer by the following :—

"In legendary poems of a semi-historical nature, it will generally be found that the most ancient portion lies towards the middle, and that the most modern is at the beginning of the series. The popularity of a poem would tempt in the first instance to continuation ; but each step becomes more difficult to take, as carrying the poet towards his own times, and thereby hampering his invention ; whereas each step backward from the commencement, by carrying him towards the unknown, adds to his freedom."*

The next citations are from the Cooke MS. and the Constitutions, 1738, which are shewn in parallel columns. The first paragraph in the left hand column (Cooke MS.) is printed in order to exhibit a passage upon which much loose speculation has arisen, and the corresponding paragraph in the other column, to preserve Dr. Anderson's statement intact. The remaining paragraphs are placed side by side, in order to show at a glance the "embellishments" of the Doctor on the original text.

* J. M. Ludlow, *Popular Epics of the Middle Ages*, i., 174.

§ § 2-5 in the right hand column, also appear in the first *Book of Constitutions* (1723), but can be more easily referred to in the later work* (1738), which has induced me to extract from it. Those readers, however, who have access to both editions of the *Constitutions* (1723 and 1738), may be recommended to compare the variances which occur between their respective texts on the point under examination, and some remarks of my own on the same subject—*i.e.*, the manner in which Dr. Anderson freely interpolated conceits of his own into *alleged* extracts from ancient documents—will be found in the publication referred to below.†

The veracity (or otherwise) of Dr. Anderson is not the issue we have to try, but I may mention in passing, that it is one of very great importance. His two *Books of Constitutions* were published in the one instance with the "Approbation" (1723) of the Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, Grand Wardens, and the Grand Lodge; and in the other, with the "Sanction" (1738) of the Grand Master, Deputy and Grand Wardens.

These works, therefore, are confidently relied upon, in some quarters, as affording conclusive proof of the existence of Grand Masters during the continuance of Ancient Masonry, or, in other words, before what is designated as the "Revival" of A.D. 1717.

This has led, in the U.S.A., to a vast literature on the "Inherent Prerogatives of Grand Masters," a topic which is amusingly referred to by one of the Reporters on Foreign Correspondence—a body for whom I have both individually and collectively a very great respect, who work on our own lines, and upon whom as an Association of advanced students, I may perhaps venture to bestow the name, of the 'Quatuor Coronati in America.' Bro. F. J. Thompson thus expresses himself with regard to a subject which has profoundly exercised the minds of the "Corps," or as they are not unfrequently called, the 'Mutuals.'‡

"The shades of night were falling fast,
As through an Alpine village passed
A Mason, who bore 'mid snow and ice,
A banner with the strange device
'Grand Master's Prerogatives'."

"His brow was sad, his pen, all ink
Stuck o'er his ear while he paused to think,
And then, as if by some one stung,
He shouted in an unknown tongue,
'Grand Master's Prerogatives'."

The subject, however, will hardly be deemed of even "academical" interest by the members of our own Lodge, unless, indeed, the mysterious attributes which are supposed to centre in a Grand Master, can be said, with any appearance of truth, to have had their origin in some recognised fact in Masonic history.

Upon this point I join issue with our worthy Secretary, Bro. Speth, who basing himself upon certain passages in the Cooke MS. (to be next presented), lays down as the 14th conclusion to be derived from a study of that document,

'that a Grand Master existed in fact, though not known by that name, and for the duration of each assembly only.'§

I do not think that any such inference is justified by the premises. My reasons for so believing will be submitted in due course, and after running the gauntlet of your criticism, it will be for the Lodge to affirm, whether, in the first place, I have explained away the hypothesis of Bro. Speth, and secondly, if I have succeeded in replacing it by a more plausible conjecture of my own.

ADDITIONAL (OR COOKE) M.S., 23, 198.

1.—The second article is this that every master of this art scholde be warned by fore to cum to his congregation that thei com dewly but yf thei may asscusyd bi sume maner cause. But neuerlesse if they be found rebelle at suche congregacions .∴ and thow they be in perylle of dethe they schalle warne the maister that is pryncipalle of the gederynge of his dessese.—ll. 739 55.

CONSTITUTIONS 1738, page 71.

1.—The CONSTITUTIONS were now meliorated; for an old Record imports, 'That in the glorious Reign of King Edward III. when Lodges were many and frequent, the Grand Master with his Wardens, at the Head of the Grand Lodge, with Consent of the Lords of the Realm, then generally Free Masons, ordain'd, That for the future, at the Making or Admission of a Brother, the Constitutions shall be read, and the Charges hereunto annexed.'

* *Lodge Reprints*, vii.

† *Hist. of Freemasonry*, i., 104.

‡ *Proc., G. L. Iowa*, 1890, s.v. Dakota.

§ *Q.C.A.*, ii., pt. 1.

2.—And so at suche congregacions they that be mad masters schold be examned of the articuls after writen & be ransakyd whether thei be abulle and kunnyng to the profyte of the lordys .: and to the honour of the forsaid art .: and trewly dispende the goodys of hero lordis .: as well the lowist as the hiest .: of whom thei take here pay for here traually.—ll. 711-27.

3.—Whan the master and the felawes be for warned ben y come to suche congregacions if nede be the Schereffe of the countre or the mayer of the Cyte or alderman of the towne in wyche the congregacons ys holde schalle be felaw and sociat to the master of the congregacion in helpe of hym a yest rebelles and upberyng the rygt of the reme.—ll. 901-12.

4.—At the fyrst begynnyng new men that neuer were chargyd bi fore beth charged .: that schold neuer be theyns nor theyns meynteners .: schuld traually for here pay .: here felaus .: hem loue as hem selfe and they schalle be trewe to the Kyng of englond and to the reme.—ll. 912-27.

5.—After that hit schalle be enqueryd if ony master or felow that is y-warnyd haue y broke ony article be forsaid .: if eny master or felawe that is warnyd bi fore to come be rebelle and wolle not come or els haue trespassed ayenst any article .: he schalle forswere his masonri and schale no more vse his craft .: the which if he presume for to do the Scherefe of the countre in the wiche he may be founde worchyng he schalle preson him & take alle his godys in to the Kyngys hond .: for this cause principally wher these congregacions ben y-ordeyned that as well the lowist as the hiest schulde be welle and trewly y-seruyd in his art biforessayd thorow ouf alle the Kyngdome of Englund. Amen. So mote it be.—ll. 930-60.

2.—That Master Masons, or Masters of Work, shall be examined whether they be able of Cunning to serve their respective Lords, as well the Highest as the Lowest, to the Honour and Worship of the foresaid Art, and to the Profit of their Lords; for they be their Lords that employ and pay them for their Travel.

3.—That when the Master and Wardens preside in a Lodge, the Sheriff, if need be, or the Mayor, or the Alderman (if a Brother) where the Chapter is held, shall be sociate to the Master, in help of him against Rebels, and for upholding the Rights of the Realm.

4.—That Enter'd Prentices at their Making shall be charged not to be Thieves, nor Thieves Maintainers. That the Fellow Crafts shall travel honestly for their Pay, and love their Fellows as themselves; and That all shall be true to the King, to the Realm, and to the Lodge.

5.—That if any of the Fraternity should be fractious, mutinous, or disobedient to the Grand Master's Orders, and after proper Admonitions, should persist in his Rebellion He shall forfeit all his Claim to the Rights, Benefits, and Privileges of a true and faithful Brother, &c. Concluding with, AMEN, So mote it be.

THE MANUSCRIPT CONSTITUTIONS.

"Also that eu'y m' and fellowe shall come to the Assembly if that it be wthin fyftie myles about him, yf he haue any warning."—*G. Lodge MS.**

"Also that every Master and fellowe shall come to the Assemble, an it be within fifty myles about him, if he haue any writing."—*Dowland MS.*†

"Alsoe that every Master and Fellow shall come to the Assembly if it be within seven miles about him if hee haue warning."—*Buchanan MS.*‡

"You shall come to the yearely assembly if you know where it is, being within tenno miles of the place of youre abode."—*Harleian MS.*, 1942.§

* Sadler, *Masonic Facts and Fictions*, 208. † Hughan, *Old Charges*, 30.

‡ *Hist. of Freemasonry*, i., 100.

§ *Q.C.A.*, ii.

" You must not on any pretence, baring sickness, absent yourself from ye Assembly if it be within fifty miles about you, if you have a letter to signifie to you the time & place where it is held."—*D.K.* MS. No. 3.*

" Shall come to the Assembly upon the first citation if it be within 5 miles."—*D.K.† MS. No. 4.*

It may be convenient to observe, in regard to the radius within which attendance at the Assembly was made obligatory by the MS. Constitutions, that five miles is the limit in 6 versions, seven miles in 3, ten miles in 3, thirty miles in 1, forty miles in 2, and fifty miles in the generality of these documents. Hughan, to whom I am indebted for these particulars, observes, " fifty miles was evidently the regular distance, and there are MSS. in all the four families‡ with that number." The lesser orbits within which the Assembly is made to revolve in some of the " forms," the same writer thinks may possibly be set down to errors of transcription.§

Having now exhausted the stock of citations from Manuscripts of the Craft, upon which I shall mainly rely as affording a picture (or pictures) of the Assembly, from the point of view of early Masonic writers, some quotations of another kind will be introduced, though as a preliminary, a passing glance at the institutions of the Anglo-Saxons becomes essential.

In the territorial organisation of the country, the primitive and lowest division was the town or township (*tun*), which included the residence of the lord, the cottages of his tenants, the lands let out to them, and his *manor*. In the townships the freemen were enrolled in *tythings*, each containing ten free families, in which every member was responsible for the orderly behaviour of the rest (*frank-pledge*). Next in order was the larger divisions into *hundreds*, first mentioned in the laws of Edgar, but probably of older institution. This expression has been variously held to refer to a district containing a hundred free families, a hundred tythings, or a hundred hydes of land.|| North of the Trent, the hundred bore the name of *Wapentake*, from the custom observed (it is said) by the followers of the ealdorman, who touched his *weapon*, or spear, planted in the soil, on the occasion of his installation. As regards the origin of the *Shires*, or counties, the largest of the territorial divisions, nothing certain is known, except that they were all in existence at the period of the Norman Conquest, and appear to have been gradually formed out of distinct British kingdoms, or districts.

Tribunals for the decision of civil and criminal causes existed in these several divisions. The township had its *hall-mote*—latterly represented by the courts-baron and court-leet. There was also the *hundred-mote*, or meeting of the hundred; the *shire-mote*, or county court; and highest of all the *Witenagemot*, that is, assembly of the *witans*, or wise men, whose assent was necessary to legislation.

Of this Great Council of the Nation, Mr. Freeman observes, " we may be sure that every Teutonic Freeman had a voice in the Assembly—the *Gemôt*, the *Gemeinde*, the *Ekklesia*—of his own Mark. In fact he in some sort retains it still, as holding a place in the parish vestry.

We cannot doubt that the Assemblies of the Mark, of the Shire, and of the Kingdom all co-existed; but at each stage of an amalgamation the competence of the inferior Assembly would be narrowed. We cannot doubt that every freeman retained in theory the right of appearing in the Assembly of the Kingdom, no less than in the Assemblies of the Mark and the Shire.

A primary assembly, an *Ekklesia*, a *Landesgemeinde*, is an excellent institution . . . but in any large community, it either becomes a tumultuous mob, or else it gradually shrinks up into an aristocratic body, as the old Teutonic Assemblies did both in England and on the Continent.

The ordinary free man gradually lost his right of personal attendance in the National Assembly, and received the more practical right of attending by representation."¶

There is no evidence to show that either the Anglo-Danish or Anglo-Norman princes introduced, or attempted to introduce, any novel code of laws into England, or interfered in

* *Dumfries Kilwinning*, Vellum Roll, 17th Century.

† Paper: Book Form; Early 18th century. This, together with the preceding extract—both kindly sent by Bro. Hughan—has only reached me after the article was in type.

‡ Under the classification of Dr. Bogemann, see *Commentary on Regius MS.*, 12.

§ W. J. H. to R. F. G., October 14th, 1892.

|| " In the reign of Henry VII., a judge said from the bench, that a *hundred* meant one hundred men, or one hundred vills, or one hundred parishes."—*Year Book*, 8 Hen. VII., 1.

¶ *Hist. Norman Conquest*, i., 106-11.

any way, either with "the ancient customs of the realm," or with the ordinary administration of justice. Indeed, a considerable portion of the Anglo-Saxon law was never recorded in writing,* and of these *unwritten* laws—referred to by Henry I. as having to be sought for "out of doors" (*foras*)—the depositaries or expounders could only have been the *judices regis* or freeholders of the realm; and as it has been well observed, "as long as the freeholders of the realm were the depositaries of the law, and expounders of 'ancient custom,' it is difficult to conceive how such law or custom, however it may have been neglected, could have been materially altered without their consent."†

Let me next endeavour to show, by extracts from approved legal text books, the practical working of the various tribunals of the Shire under the Norman sovereigns and their successors.

"The Court of the whole *Shire* was of two sorts: whereof the first then called *Scyregemote* [also *Reve-mote*, or *Fole-mote*], that is, the *Assemblee* of the *Shire* (and now termed the *Sheriffes turne*) was then (as now also) holden twice a year.

"And this *Court* was of like *Jurisdiction* to the *Court* of the *Leet*, or of the *Burroughs* or *Tythings*, as it was then called.

"The Second and the *Hundred Court*, then named *Hundredmote*, was in those dayes appointed to bee holden once in a month.

"The *Court-Baron* was anciently called *Heal-gemot*, and corruptly *Hay-lemot*. That is, the *Court* of the *Hall*, *Mannor* or chiefe place."‡

"The *Shireeves Turn* . . . was antiently called *Scyre mote* (*id est*, the meeting of the *Inhabitants* of the *Shire*), and was held twice in the year long before the *Norman Conquest*; but since that, the *Shireeves Turne*, from the French word *tour*, *id est*, *vice*, and in English *Turne*. Herein sate together the *Bishop* of the *Diocess*, and the *Earl* or *Eolderman*, in shires that had *Ealdermen*; and the *Bishop* and *Shireeves* in such counties as were committed to *Shireeves*, for many ages in the *Saxons* time, as from these *Laws* of King *Edgyr* and *Canutes*, cited in the *Margent*, doth appear"§

Sergeant Stephen informs us:—"This *Court-baron* is of two natures: the one is a customary *Court*, appertaining entirely to the *copyholders*; the other is a *Court* of *Common law*, held before the *freehold* tenant, and of this *Court* the *steward* of the *manor* is rather the *registrar* than the *judge*. These two species of *Courts-baron*, though in their nature distinct, are frequently confounded together.

"A *Hundred Court* is only a larger *Court-baron*. This *Court* is said by *Sir Edward Coke* to have been derived out of the *Sheriff's County Court* for the ease of the people that they might have justice done to them at their own doors, without any charge or loss of time; but its institution was probably co-eval with that of hundreds themselves.

"In those antient times this county court was of great dignity and splendour; the *bishop* and the *ealdor man* (or *earl*) with the principal men of the *shire*, sitting therein to administer justice, both in lay and ecclesiastical causes.||

"The *Hundred Court* was to be held every month, and the *General County Court* twice or thrice a year, the *Sheriff* holding the *County Court* in each hundred in turn, whence it was called his 'tourn.' The *lords* had jurisdiction over their own tenants in their own courts, the *Courts-baron* of the *manors*; but if they were accused by others, then the *hundred courts* had jurisdiction.

"The *earls*, *counts*, and *comites* were chiefs of counties; the *sheriffs*—*vice-comites* or *viscounts*—were their deputies; and *ealdermen*, who answer to our modern *aldermen*, were chiefs of hundreds.

"The *Bishop* and the *Sheriff* used twice a year to go a circuit, within a month after *Easter*, and a month after *Michaelmas*; and hold the *Great Court* called the *Tourn*. Once a year, at the *Easter*¶ *Tourn* or circuit, the *Sheriff* and *Bishop* were to hold also a *view of frank pledge*: that is, to see that every person above twelve years of age had taken the oaths of allegiance, and found nine *freemen pledges* for his peaceable demeanour."**

It will be seen that *County Courts* were held in various places (*i.e.*, in the hundreds)—once a month. These were courts of criminal jurisdiction. The *Great County Court* (or *Tourn*) of each *Shire*, however, was held only twice a year, answering to our *Assizes*.

* Palgrave, *Hist. of Normandy and England*.

† E. W. Robertson, *Scotland under her Early Kings*, 507-8.

‡ W. Lambard, *Archeion*, (1635), 14, 15.

§ Dugdale, *Origines Juridicales*, edit. 1671, c. xiii.

|| *New Commentaries on the Laws of England*, edit. 1868, iii., chap. iv.

¶ According to *Reeves* (2d. edit. 1787, i., 246), by a law of Hen. III., the view of Frankpledgo was to be held by the *Sheriff* at *Michaelmas*. The same authority, however, tells us that the *Sheriffs* disregarded the Act, and hold their *Tourns* sometimes in *Lent*, and sometimes after the yule of *August*.—*Hist. Eng. Laws*, ii., 404.

** *Reeves, Hist. of the English Law*, edit. 1869, (Finlaison) i., 14, 16.

By a law of Henry I., all persons, as well peers as commoners, clergy or laity, were required to give attendance at the tourn, to hear a charge from the Sheriff, and to take the oath of allegiance to the King.* But in the *Mirror of Justice* it is stated that Henry III. excused the bishops, earls, barons, etc., from attendance at the County Court.†

But the resemblance between the old county courts and the new courts held by the King's judges was so great, that the chief men of the county considered they were entitled to sit as if they formed a part of it. In the reign of Richard II. this was prohibited, and it was ordained that no lord or other in the county, little or great, shall sit upon the Bench with the justices, to take assizes in their sessions in the counties of England ‡

Reeves—according to his latest editor—has confounded the court leet or court baron with the hundred, and Mr. Finlaison observes :—

“ It is to be borne in mind that the word leet, or assembly, was a general term ; and the court leet might either be the hundred court or it might be the court baron. The leet means assembly or meeting, and was a general word applicable either to the hundred court or to the court of a manor. It was said :—‘ Le Leete est le plus ancient court in le realme,’ § and there can be no doubt that though the name ‘ leet ’ is Saxon, the Court had its origin in the formation of the hundred in the Roman times, as the court barons were also incident to the ‘ villa ’ and the manor.” ||

Here we have a little confusion, as by other legal writers the court leet is always mentioned as being something quite distinct from the court baron—*e.g.*, “ There were in Birmingham, as elsewhere, two distinct Courts and sets of Records ; namely, the Court Leet with its records, and the Court Baron with its records. The distinction is important and significant. Every male inhabitant, of fit age, was bound to attend the Court Leet, and was liable to be fined if absent. At the Court Baron, only those were bound to attend who held land under the custom of the manor. The Court Leet was a court chiefly of criminal procedure ; while the Court Baron dealt with the rights of property, the course of inheritance, and the different obligations that existed between the lord of a manor and the owners of land. Each court had the power of making bye-laws, and these could only be made in open court.” ¶ But I suppose the explanation must be looked for in the circumstance that in very early days the meetings of all our English courts were doubtless referred to as “ Assemblies.”

The same word is constantly met with in the records of our English Guilds, where it is used to denote the chief day of meeting, or Grand Festival of the year. Thus, we are told that “ the distinction between the ‘ gatherings ’ (congregations) and ‘ general meetings ’ (assemblies) is seen at a glance in most of the ordinances ” ** also that “ every Gild had its appointed day or days of meeting, once a year, twice, three times, or four times, as the case might be, when all the brethren and sistren, summoned by the Dean or other officer, met together to transact their common affairs. At these meetings, called morn-speches (in the various forms of the word), or ‘ dayes of spekyngges tokedere for here comune profyte,’ much business was done, such as the choice of officers, admittance of new brethren, making up accounts, reading over the ordinances, &c., *one day, where several were held in the year, being fixed as the general day.*’ ††

The term Leet, or Assembly, was also known as *Law Day*. Sir Thomas Smith (1512-77) says, “ The Leet and Law-day is all one & betokeneth word for word, *Legitimum*, or *juridicum diem*. Law, the old Saxons called *Lant* or *Lag*, and so by corruption and changing of Language from *Lant* to *Leet*, understanding day. They which keepe our full English terme, call it yet *Law-yad.*” †††

According to a much later writer, “ The word *Leet* is to be found neither in the Saxon law, nor in Glanvil, Bracton, Britton, Fleta, or the *Mirror*, our most ancient law writers, nor in any Statute prior to the 57th year of King Edward III. §§ though it is allowed to occur in the Conqueror's Charter for the foundation of Battle Abbey, and not infrequently in Domesday book.

But though we do not meet with the *word* among the Saxons, there can be no doubt of the existence of the *thing.*” ||||

* *Ibid.*, i., 83.

† c. i., s. 16. “ The Statute of Marlebridge in 52 Hen. III., exemptoth all Archbishops, Bishops, Abbots, Priors, Earls, Barons, from coming thither.”—Dugdale, *Origines Juridicales*, 2d. ed. 1671, art. “ The Shireoves Turn.”

‡ 20 Richard II., c. 111. § *Year-Book*, Hen. vi., 7, 12. || Reeves, i., 17.

¶ Smith, *English Gilds*, 439. ** *Ibid.*, 128. †† *Ibid.*, xxxii.

‡‡ *Commonwealth of England*, (ed. 1640) c. xix., 156, 157.

§§ c. 28. After which it does not appear again until the 4 Edw. iv., c. i. See also 12 Edw. iv., c. 9.

|||| Ritson, *Jurisdiction of the Court-Leet*, 3d. ed., 1816, 1, 4.

That "*Leete* or *Leta*, is otherwise called a law day," we are also told by Dr. Johnson in his dictionary, and to the same effect is the evidence of Lord Bacon (or of a publication included among the works of that author)* from which we learn, "of these hundred courts, there is a jurisdiction known and certain, and that is, first to deal in such things as the Sheriff in his Turn might do. And they be in common speech called Law-days or Leets,† to be kept twice a year."

At Worcester, in the municipal archives, there are two very interesting volumes of ancient records relating to that city. One of these contains two sets of Ordinances, of which the first was made by the citizens in the time of Edward IV. (1467); and the second in the twelfth year of Henry VII. (1497). The other volume is of much later date, and is lettered at the back "*Liber Legum*." This—to use the words of Miss Lucy Toulmin Smith—"brings down the history of the local bye-laws, and shows the actual working of an important English institution, now forgotten. It contains the records of the Courts Leet, or Views of Frank Pledge, held in the Guild-hall of Worcester, from 1624 to 1710, at which the laws of the city were perused, amended, and confirmed; the grand jury-men being frequently pointed out as the 'Law-makers.' The leet itself is, in both volumes, often called the 'Law-day'; while another proof of the close relations between the municipal body of the city and the Guild is given by the fact that it is, as often, spoken of as the 'yeld' [*gild*] or even 'yeld-marchant' [*gild-merchant*].‡

The manner of holding the "*Lawe day*" or View of Frank Pledge, by the Mayor, Sheriff, and Bailiff of Bristol, is set out at length in the records of that city. This was to take place "within a month after Michaelmas," the time of year selected differing from that observed at Worcester, where the Law-day was holden at "*hokday*"§—*i.e.*, the Tuesday fortnight after Easter Day,—in both of which customs we may trace a survival of the ancient practice in Anglo-Saxon times, of the Bishop and the Sheriff holding a View of Frank Pledge at the Great Court of the Tourn, at the same periods of the year.

Hallam tells us:—"Every freeman above the age of twelve years was required to be enrolled in some tything. In order to enforce this . . . the courts of the tourn and leet were erected. But this custom gradually died away. According to the laws ascribed to the Confessor, lords, who possessed a baronial jurisdiction, were permitted to keep their military tenants and the servants of their household under their own peculiar frank-pledge."||

Traces of the actual view of frank-pledge appear in Cornwall as late as the 16th of Henry VI.¶

"It is very remarkable that there is no appearance of the frank-pledge in that part of England which had formed the Kingdom of Northumberland."**

At Bristol—as in Worcester—the old ordinances show the amicable connection of the Craft Guilds with the municipal authorities; and the Mayor evidently possessed a ministerial function in confirming the election of the masters of the Crafts.†† The articles or Ordinances of the Corporation of Bristol, though written down by the Town Clerk in 1479 (18 Edward IV.), were, no doubt, copied by him from some older and well-known laws.

Before, however, passing away from the immediate subject of our inquiry, the following extracts demand a place:—

"There were two Courts assigned to [the Sheriff], *viz.*, the Countie Court (held every month) and the Sheriffes turne, held twice every yeare, by which two Courts, the whole Countie was governed: the Countie Court was for one man to have remedie against another, for any thing betwene them under 40 shillings. And the Sheriffes turne: unto which every man within the countie of a certain age, should come, and were compelled to come, that they might not be ignorant of the things there published (*or given in charge*) whereby they were to be governed; . . . they were sworn to be true and faithfull to the King, etc. Afterwards it seemed to be too great a thing for the Sheriffe to performe all in his owne person, whereupon Hundreds were ordained, and divided out of Counties, and in every Hundred was appointed a Conservator of the peace called a Constable; and after, Boroughs were made and ordained, and within every one of them a pettie Constable. So that . . . the Hundreds and Boroughs *did resort unto the Tournes, by reason of their allegiance*, And the Constables and pettie Constables, did there present the defaults of offenders, but

* *The Use of the Law*, Bacon's Works, ed. Spedding, vii., pt. ii., 467.

† The *Leet* is also called a *Law-Day*, and a view of Frank-pledge. Scroggs, *Practice of Courts-Leet*, 3d. ed., 1816, 1, 4. Shoppard, *Court-Keeper's Guide*, 7th ed., 1685, 3.

‡ *English Guilds*, 409-11.

§ *Ibid.*, 385, 421.

|| *Middle Ages*, ii., 290.

¶ *Ibid.*

** *Ibid.*, citing Sir F. Palgrave, i., 202.

†† *Eng. Guilds*, 430.

afterwards upon consideration had of the great trouble, which the people sustained in travelling to the Sheriffs Tourn, *Leets* or *View of Frankpledge* were granted unto Lords of Manors, within certaine precincts, to reforme all manner of defaults there.

The most principall uses of this Court.

1. To take view of all Frankpledges, and to punish delicts and offences.
2. To elect and swear all officers and ministers of justice, who are to attend the service of that meeting, as *Constables, Tethingmen*, and such others.
3. [The oath of allegiance] the effect whereof is, "you shall swear that from this day forward you shall be true and faithfull to our Sovereign Lord the King and his heires, and truth and faith shall bear of life, and member and terrene honour. And you shall neither know, nor hear of any ill or dammage intended unto him, that you shall not defend; So help you God.*"

"Whatsoever the law prescribes or restraines in the Sherifes Tourne, the same is binding in a *Court Leet*, and it was agreed for law † that the power of a Sheriffe in the Tourne, and a Steward in the *Leet* were all one."‡

"The *Leet* was ordained to have every person, of the age of twelve years, which had remained their by a year and a day, to be sworn to be faithful and loyal to the King; and also for that, that the people might be kept in peace and obedience, these Courts-Leets were ordained.

"The Steward shall make a precept to warn the Court by reasonable warning, as by six or more days, as followeth, and it is the better, if it be by fifteen dayes, according to the Common dayes in the Bench.

"It is *enquirable*. If all Artificers make good ware as they ought; and, if any of them make deceit on it, to deceive the People, you ought to present their names.

"*Turn and Leet*, are all one, and they may enquire of common annoyances, as of bloudshed, and of the night walkers."§

"The *Leet* is instituted for reformation of publick offences or Crown matters within the precincts thereof, after the example of the Sheriff's turn. The *Leet* is holden before the Steward as judge; who hath (except in some few things) the same power for the compass and reach of its jurisdiction which the Sheriff hath in his turn for the whole county. And therefore after the grant of this derivative *Leet*, the Sheriff in his turn is not to meddle within the reach of this *Leet*, unless it be in case of the neglect of this *Leet*; and that not then neither (as it seems) without a special writ: and unless it be in case where the *Leet* is forfeit into the King's hands. It is good to give notice enough, six days or more before the time; but if it be less time it is sufficient in law."||

Listening under walls and windows was a crime at common law. It was one of the duties of a Court *Leet* Jury to inquire after and present the common drunkard and ale-house haunter, the frequenter of brothels, the common barretor, or strife raiser, "the evesdropper, he that doth hearken under windowes, and the like, to hear and then tell newes to breed debate between neighbours."¶

The "Articles of Inquiry"*** which came regularly before every Sheriff's Tourn, are given in *Fleta*. †† Among them is, "*Whether all on the Roll have come up the Folk-mote.*"

Mr. Toulmin Smith says—"Many other and varying lists might be quoted,"‡‡ but I will only cite one further article, which is taken from a publication of 1642:—

"If any artificers, workmen, or labourers, do conspire, covenant, etc., not to make or doe their workes but at a certaine price or rate, or shall not enterprise or take upon them to finish what another has begun, or shall doe but certain work in a day, or shall not worke but at certaine houres and times."§§

For these offences penalties were provided.

"The position used by Fineux in 12 Hen. 7, 15, that the *Leet* is derived out of the Sheriffs Tourn, is not entitled to any particular notice, being a mere unsupported *dictum*: to which neither *Lord Coke's* adoption (2 *Inst.* 71), nor that of *Lord Mansfield* (3 *Burr.* 1860) can add any weight. As to the rest, the word *Leet*, though generally appropriated to the Court of a Manor, has in fact nothing essentially distinct from the *Tourne*, but the being upon a smaller scale. Before the Conquest, and probably for some time after, this Court of the

* Powell, *Jurisdictions of the Ancient Courts or Leet, of Views or Frank-Pledge*, (1642), 16-19.

† 22 Edw. iv., 22.

‡ Powell, 22.

§ Kitchin, *Jurisdiction, or the Lawful Authority of Courts Leet, Courts Baron, etc.* 5th ed., (1675) 6, 11, 22, 45.

¶ Sheppard, *Court-Keeper's Guide*, 7th ed., (1685) 3, 4.

¶¶ *Ibid.*, 48.

*** See the *Regius MS.*, l. 441, and the *Cooke MS.*, l. 930.

†† *Lib.* ii., c. 52.

‡‡ *Local Self Gov.*, 299.

§§ Powell, *Jurisdiction of the Ancient Courts of Leet, or view of Frank-Pledge*, 118.

Leet was, if not the sole, at least the most useful dispensary of criminal justice in the kingdom. No crime, in those remote ages, appears to have been punished by death, unless it were that of open theft, where the offender was taken with the *mainour*, that is, with the thing stolen upon him; and of this crime, *and this only*,* the cognisance did not belong to the Leet."

"In ancient leets personal notice (of time and place, etc.), perhaps, is not necessary; but notice in the church and market may be well: otherwise it is not an ancient leet. (11 *Mod.* 76).

"The common warning in leet is for three or four days before the leet; and if, by prescription, they ought to be warned fifteen days, and are not, they may not disturb the holding of the leet, unless by prescription. (38 Henry VI., 16)."†

The preceding extracts, culled from the best sources at my command, will in each case take the reader over the same ground, though as no two of these routes are precisely alike, it may be necessary to explain that where so much depends upon the actual words of the legal writers, upon whose diction and phraseology I shall presently rely—as affording a possible clue to the elucidation of what the "Assembly" really was at which the Masons were required to be present, I have thought it desirable to preserve, as far as possible, every shade or turn of expression from which any inference can be drawn.

Before, however, proceeding to formulate the conclusions which seem to me deducible from the testimony of these sages of the law, I shall indulge in one further quotation from the same source of authority, by which the salient features of the Tourn and Leet will be presented in a clearer or more popular form, and thus lessen, I trust, to some degree the fatigue of the reader in following the observations I shall afterwards make upon the procedure of these ancient (and now obsolete) courts.

'The *Sheriffs' Tourn*, or *rotation*, is a court appointed to be held twice every year, within a month after Easter and Michaelmas, before the Sheriff in different parts of the county; being, indeed, only the *turn* of the Sheriff to keep a court leet, in each respective hundred. This, therefore, is the great court leet of the county, as the common law county court is the court baron: for out of this, for the ease of the Sheriff, was taken,—

"The *Court Leet*, or *View of Frank Pledge*, which is a court appointed to be held once in the year and not oftener, within a particular hundred, lordship, or manor, before the steward of the leet. Its original intent was to view the frank pledges, that is, the freemen with the liberty, who were all mutually pledges for the good behaviour of each other. Besides this, the preservation of the peace, and the chastisement of divers minute offences against the public good, were the objects both of the court leet, and of the Sheriff's tourn; which had exactly the same jurisdiction, one being only a larger species of the other, extending over more territory, but not over more causes. All freeholders within the precinct were obliged to attend them, and all persons commorant therein, which commorancy consisted in usually lying there. *It was antiently the custom to summon all the King's subjects, as they respectively grew to years of discretion and strength, to come to the court leet, and there take the oath of allegiance to the King.* The other general business of the leet and tourn was to present by jury all crimes whatsoever that happened within their jurisdiction; and not only to present, but also to punish, all trivial misdemeanors;—as all trivial debts were recoverable in the court baron and county court:—justice, in these minuter matters of both inds being brought home to the doors of every man by our antient constitution. The objects of their jurisdiction are therefore unavoidably very numerous; being such as in some degree, either less or more, affect the public weal, or good government of the district in which they arise, from common nuisances and other material offences against the King's peace and public trade, down to eaves-dropping, waifs, and irregularities in public commons. But both the tourn and the leet fell by degrees into a declining way, a circumstance owing in part to the discharge granted by the statute of Marlbridge (52 Henry III., c. 10), to all prelates, peers and clergymen from their attendance upon these courts, which occasioned them to grow into disrepute."‡

Nevertheless, as we are elsewhere told—"The people clung with tenacity to their old institutions, and especially to the old turbulent popular tribunals, the courts of the hundred and the county. The difficulty was solved in this way: the old tribunals, or at least the old *assemblies* were retained, and they were, at the same time, slowly and by degrees modified and then becoming superseded and obsolete were practically abolished."§

* The words italicised will convey a very good idea of the comprehensive jurisdiction of the Court Leet.

† Ritson, *Jurisdiction of the Court-Leet*, 3d ed., (1816) 4, 13, 41.

‡ Stephen, *New Commentaries on the Laws of England*, (ed. 1868), iv., 408-10.

§ Reeves, i., 80.

But the Court Leet or View of Frank pledge preserved a vigorous vitality for very many years after the date (*as a written document*) of the Masonic poem (or Regius MS.), indeed, so late as 1540—by Stat. 31 Hen. VIII., c. 14, s. 8—it is expressly enacted that (in addition to their then existing duties) the Leets should inquire touching even the heresies, felonies, contempts, and other offences connected with religion, before named in that act. Our concern, however—in the first instance—is with the state of the law at the time the poem was written, whereby we may gain some clue to the exact nature of the tribunal, which must have been in the contemplation of the author (or compiler) in the passages where he refers to the “Assembly.”

Assuming, therefore, that the poem was either written very late in the 14th, or very early in the 15th century, the suggestion I shall venture to submit for your consideration will be that the meeting or assize, referred to in *Punctus duodecimus*, or in the other Points or Articles, where, from the language employed the existence of an actual or contemporary tribunal is plainly to be inferred, was the “Assemblie of the Shire,” or great court of the Tourn.

This, the chief criminal court of the Saxons, continued to be presided over by each sheriff in his county, until 1461, when from what Mr. Reeves calls “a revolution in an ancient branch of our judicial establishment,”* his jurisdiction was restrained. By Stat. 1, Edward IV., c. ii., the authority of the Sheriff in the Tourn to take indictments or presentments for felony was transferred to the Justices of the Peace.

As the poem under examination was undoubtedly written before 1461, the altered procedure of the Tourn, which dates from that year, will not concern us, but some remarks by learned writers on the jurisdiction of this ancient court, though expressed at a much later period, may be of assistance at this point of our research.

Thus, it was said by Sir Edward Coke—“The articles inquirable in the Tourn are known, and [therefore] need not be here rehearsed.”† By Selden, “That the Sheriff’s Tourn is at this day”‡; and also, “It hath ever been the way for Fathers to bind their Sons. To strengthen this by the Law of the Land, every one at twelve years of Age, is to take the Oath of Allegiance in Court-Leets, whereby he swears Obedience to the King.”§ By Sir Dudley Digges (1628), “We have now, as our fathers had, the Court Barons and Court Leets, and Sheriff’s Courts [Tourns], whereby right is rendered in every village.”|| And by Lord Bacon, that all these Courts before mentioned, “are in use and exercise as Law at this day, concerning the Sheriff’s Law-dayes [Tourns] and Leets.”¶

The foregoing citations are given, however, not with a view of showing what the law then was,** with regard more especially to the Sheriff’s Tourn, but what it had been, at a more remote period, for it is laid down by a living authority of great weight and reputation, that “in the course of the [15th] century the jurisdiction of the Sheriffs both as judges and as committing magistrates, having been practically altogether displaced, the Tourns became a mere engine of extortion,”†† and shortly after “became practically obsolete, and the only remnant of the Ancient Criminal Jurisdiction of the County Court which still survived, was to be found in the leet,”‡‡

One of the ablest Commentators upon the Statutes of the Realm states:—

“It was an ancient regulation of police, that every inhabitant of a county who was above the age of twelve years should attend the Sheriff’s Tourn in order to hear the *capitula coronæ* read over, and given in charge. This, before the establishment of justices in eyre, was the only opportunity of their being instructed with regard to the Crown Law, and it was probably supposed that such a charge would not only be understood by a child above that age, but make a lasting impression. As it was very inconvenient, however, and expensive for all the inhabitants of a county to attend, the Statute of the Magna Charta very properly confines these tourns of the Sheriff to be held only twice in a year; but as

* iii., 5. † *Fourth Institute*, (1644) 260.

‡ *Titles of Honour*, (1631) 628.

§ *Table-Talk*, (ed. 1860) 156.

|| Rushworth, *Historical Collections*, i., 153.

¶ *Use of the Law*, (ed. 1635) 9.

** *i.e.*, early seventeenth century.

†† Madox mentions among the Matters to be enquired into—40 Hen. III.: “Whether *John le Moyne* took in the several hundreds and geldable Towns of the Counties of *Cambridge* and *Huntendon*, in the Sheriff’s Turn, certain Sums of Money, against the Custom used in the said Counties . . . and whether *John de Marines* took of a certain Villato of *Baldwin’s* one Mark, for that every Man that was twelve years old did not come to his Sheriff’s turn.”—*Hist. and Antiq. of the Exchequer*, 2d ed. (1769) i., 446.

‡‡ Sir J. F. Stephen, *Hist. Criminal Law*, (1883), 84.

whole townships were frequently amerced for neglecting to appear, this Statute dispenses with such attendance, providing there is a jury consisting of a sufficient number to punish offenders."*

"The turns or tourns of the sheriffs and bailiffs might, according to the Great Charter, only take place twice a year, not oftener, because their coming occasioned loss of time and money to the sworn men who had to leave home, and to the King's subjects at whose houses these officers had to lodge."†

Such an effect, indeed, as the Hon. Daines Barrington has suggested to have been the object of the charge by the Sheriff, it is possible to imagine, may have been produced on the mind of the author (or reciter) of the Masonic poem, and to have called into exercise the faculty of retrospection, when he proceeded to glance at the jurisdiction of a court, with the procedure of which he had been familiar from his youth upwards.

But the disciplinary regulations—Articles and Points—must be carefully distinguished from the legendary history. For while in the former the references to the Assembly evidently point in the direction of the Tourn—in the latter,‡ they may, perhaps, be held to suggest a traditional "Assembly," or even a meeting of the Witenagemote, convoked by King Athelstan.

The injunction, however, that "it should be held each year or third year," which also appears in a slightly different form in the Cooke MS. § rather bears against the latter hypothesis, as the necessity of the Sheriff holding his Court-leet in various places *in turn*, might well have rendered Triennial visits to particular Hundreds, the ordinary usage.||

In the Masonic poem (or Regius MS.) we have the earliest known attempt to form a connected history of Masonry. This is carried a step farther in the Cooke MS., where we find certain passages (already set out in this paper), from which—passing over earlier commentators—conclusions have been drawn by Bro. Speth, that a Grand Master of Masons existed in fact—*i.e.*, for the duration of each Assembly—and that he was supported, if need be, by the Sheriff, Mayor or Alderman.

That the Master who presided at the meeting was a Mason, is a reading of the evidence to which I cannot yield my assent. The view I entertain being that he was either Steward or Bailiff of the Leet (not Tourn), and that stronger arms of the law, in the persons of the Sheriff and the others, were to assist him if his own authority was insufficient. Master, Mayster, or Maister (*Fr.* Maistre: *Lat.* magister) seems to have denoted a man of rank, learning, or position, for example, Chaucer has—

"Now maister (quod this lord) I yow biseke,
No maister, Sir (quod he) but servitour,
Though I have had in scole such honour,
God liketh it not that Raby¶ men us calle,
Neither in market, neyther in your large hall."—*Sompnoures Tale*, l. 484.

Also, in the *Chronicle of England*,** by J. Hardyng, a contemporary of Hotspur, we find the Archbishop of York referred to as "Maister Richard Scrope."

The "Maister" who is referred to in the Cooke MS., as the "pryncipalle" of the gathering (l. 754), I deem to have been a magistrate, yet if the passages in that document on which Bro. Speth relies, can be held to convey the meaning he has placed upon them—then, without a shadow of a doubt, I think we may safely pronounce those portions of the *codex* to be quite as fabulous as any other part of it.

The date ordinarily assigned to the Manuscript is "Early 15th Century," when the Sheriffs and other officers of Counties were actively employed in keeping both free men and villeins from leaving their homes, the former being held in readiness to serve as soldiers, the latter striving to reach the towns, while both were in urgent requisition as labourers and mechanics. Under the Statutes of that time, if a man was "found wandering about the country" he could be put to work by any one.††

There was a small and thinly scattered population.‡‡ The great highways of commerce were suffered to remain comparatively neglected. Chaucer's pilgrims took three

* Barrington, *Observations on the More Ancient Statutes*, 4th ed., (1775) 69. It would seem, however, that a general attendance must still have been compulsory at the particular Tourn where the annual View of the Frank-Pledge was held. See the last note but one.

† Jusserand, *Wayfaring Life in the Middle Ages* (xivth century), tr. by Lucy T. Smith, 113.

‡ *ll.* 75, 86, 471-90.

§ *l.* 703.

|| In the diocese of Exeter, the Bishop used to visit each town *in turn*, for confirmation purposes—the intervals between these meetings, always being (in my youth) a period of three years.

¶ Rabbi.

** Edit. 1812 (Sir H. Ellis), 351.

†† 11 Hen. iv., f. 27. See under "Statutes of Labourers," *post*, the laws passed in the 23rd, 25th, and 34th years of Edward III.

‡‡ C. H. Pearson, *English History in the 14th Century*, 320.

days and a half for the journey of less than sixty miles from London to Canterbury,* Skilled artisans were confined to the towns.† It would seem, too, that at least in some cases, where great works were carried on, they must have been annually “sworn” at the scene of their labours. Thus, we learn from the Fabric Rolls of York Minster, that there was a duly appointed pledge-day (*m'egh dai*), when the workmen swore to observe the order which the Chapter had ordained for their management. This they were required to do at least *once a year*.‡

Such testimony as that of the anonymous writer of the Cooke MS., *i.e.*, if it will bear the construction that has been placed upon it, was often feigned by the mediæval semi-romancers;§ and if we believe it, it will be necessary to suppose, that great officers like the Sheriff, Mayor, and Alderman, humbly attended the Assemblies of the Masons, and performed there analogous duties to those discharged at the present day by the Magistrates' Clerk at Petty Sessions, or the Solicitor to a Public Company at a general meeting.

I strongly incline to the opinion, that the actual or living “Assembly” referred to in the poem was the “Sheriff's Law-daye,” or Tourn, but whether the same expression in the Manuscript Constitutions will lend itself to a similar interpretation is a point which it is more difficult to decide.

From the quotations already adduced with regard to the procedure of the Leet, attendance at which was *usually* ensured by due notice being given of the time and place of meeting, we might naturally infer that a similar warning was not only usual but a positive necessity in the case of all those whose presence was obligatory at the Tourn. That such warning, however, was actually incumbent on the Sheriff we learn from a law enacted in 1234:—“Because we have heard that you and your bailiffs, and other bailiffs who hold hundreds in your Shire, do not understand how often Hundred-motes and Wapentakes ought to be held in your Shire, according to the great charter confirmed in our minority,—We have caused the said charter to be read again in presence of our Great Council; and the following clause in it to be expounded before them and by them [*coram eis et per eos*],—‘that no sheriff nor bailiff shall make his TOURN in his hundreds but twice a year, and always in the accustomed place.’ Many declared that in the time of Henry our grand ather [Henry II.], as well Hundred-motes and Wapentakes as Leets of Lords were used to be held twice a month. And whereas we greatly long to provide for the common good of the whole Kingdom, and for the protection of the poor; but the two Tourns above said cannot suffice for maintaining the peace of the land and for correcting the excesses as well of the poor as of the rich which pertain to the jurisdiction of every hundred,—Be it ordained, by our Common Council aforesaid, of the Bishops, Lords, and Others, that between the said two tourns, there shall be held, as well Hundred-motes and Wapentakes, as Leets of Lords, once every three weeks, where before they have been held fortnightly. Yet so that there *need not* be a *general summons* made to these Hundred-motes and Wapentakes, as *there is* to the said Tourns; but to these Hundred-motes and Wapentakes, all shall come who seek justice, and those against whom they complain, and those who owe suit, by whom the causes shall be tried and the judgments made; *unless* the e be any *inquiry* touching *criminal matters* [&c.], to make which four shall come from every next vill [to be sworn to their inquiry], as well as all others of those villis who may be needed to make a true inquiry.”||

Indeed, as meeting in each Hundred in its turn, the Sheriff's law-day must have required a far longer notice to ensure its becoming a “reasonable warning,” than in the parallel case of the Steward's Leet. Nor could it at any time have been an easy task, in a large county, containing numerous Hundreds, to notify every town, village and hamlet, in all of them, when and where the Assembly of the Shire would be held. These considerations may help in some degree to explain a common feature of the manuscript Constitutions, to which attention has already been directed, *viz.*, the radius within which attendance was obligatory at the Assembly.

Every Guild or Craft had its fixed place and days of meeting, and in the towns especially—for I think we may safely pass over the villages and hamlets as being very

* *Ibid.*, 7.

† *Ibid.*, 30. See further, J. H. Wylie, *Hist. of England under Hen. iv.*, i., (1399-1404) *passim*.

‡ *Surtcees Soc. Pub.*, xxxv., 171.

§ Hallam, *Middle Ages*, ii., 301.

|| 18 Hen. III. Mr. Toulmin Smith, who gives a translation of the Act, observes:—“It is an extraordinary thing that this, certainly one of the most important Statutes in every respect that ever was passed, is neither found in the folio edition of the Statutes published by the Record Commission, nor as far as I can find, elsewhere among their publications.”—*Local Self-Government*, 220. The Statute 18 Hen. III. is published at full length in Prynno's *Parliamentary Writs*, i., (*Intro.*).

unlikely centres in those rude times for trade association—there cannot be any room for doubt, that the meetings of all the local fraternities would be held within the liberties of the burgh or city.

I think, therefore, if we read the poem in conjunction with the MS. Constitutions the inference will be permissible that (about the year 1400) “new men” at their entry, were sworn on the Holy Writings, and “charged” to observe certain regulations, one of which was, that if held within a particular distance, and on being duly “warned,” they should attend the Assembly of the Shire.

It is possible, of course, that during the interval of time which separates the Masonic poem from the earliest of the Manuscript Constitutions, many influences were at work—notably the combined effect of the various Statutes of Labourers, upon which some remarks have yet to be expressed—that may have conduced in many instances to constitute the Leet, a substitute for the Tourn, but these I shall leave to be dealt with by some abler hand, in a more exhaustive analysis of our written traditions, which will shortly be required, if the labours of our Secretary in re-producing them are continued at the same fever heat.

The argument I am presenting, therefore, chiefly refers to the period at which the poem was compiled, and at the date in question—whether late fourteenth or early fifteenth century is immaterial—I conceive that the “Assembly” referred to by the anonymous versifier was a *moveable* court, whose meetings were notified by a “General Summons” which, as we have seen, was not absolutely required to be issued, and must indeed have been in most instances unnecessary, in the case of the small *fixed* courts, where, as it has been expressed, “justice was brought to every man’s door.”

The remaining “Charges,” both in the poem and the Manuscript Constitutions, ought, I believe, for the most part to be construed disjunctively, and viewed as inculcations of the Craft, deriving their sanction from the customs of the trade.

To this, of course, may be replied, that according to the language of the latter documents, a resort to the “Common Law” was not allowed until after the powers of the Assembly had presumably been exhausted, but it is with the poem that I am primarily concerned, where there is no such limitation of the jurisdiction.

In the MS. Constitutions, it is true, the reference to the Assembly of the Shire can only be made out by implication, as the Sheriff, Mayor, Knights, Squires, and Aldermen are not mentioned, as happens in the poem, but without labouring this point it may be urged that the charge for trespassers against the science, to stand to the award of their fellows, and if they cannot agree, then to go to the Common Law, may simply mean that all *civil* actions, triable in [some form of] the Court-baron, which as we have seen, was the “Common Law County Court,” were not to be proceeded with, in cases arising out of trade disputes, and to which Masons were the parties, until an attempt, at least, had been made to settle them amicably out of court.

It should also be borne in mind that—to use the words of Mr. Toulmin Smith—“while the Institution of the Sheriff’s Tourn and the Court Leet provided the periodical local courts of *criminal* administration; those of the County Courts and the Hundred Courts, and in some points the Courts Baron, the Courts of *Civil* Administration.”*

As regards coming under the jurisdiction of the former, very little option could have been exercisable by those “presented” at either the Tourn or Leet; but with respect to the latter, and particularly what are called “personal actions,”† all suits, even if begun, could be forthwith terminated by consent of the parties to them.

It was, moreover, a common feature of guild life, as abundantly disclosed in the ordinances of these associations published by Mr. Toulmin Smith, that members were not to go to law with one another until the dispute had been laid before the authorities of the guild. Thus, the ninth statute of the guild of St. Clement (and two others) of Cambridge (*fifteenth century*) has:—“Also if any man be at heynesse with any of his bretheryne for any maner of trespas, he schal not pursewen him in no maner of courte: but he schal come firste to the Alderman, and schewen to hym his greuance. And than the alderman schal sende aftyr that odyr man, and knowen his offence. And than he schal make eyther of hem for to chesen a brothir of the forsayde companye, or ellys ij. bretheren, for to accorde hem and sett hem at rest and pees. And if those men so chosen, with the good mediacon of the alderman, mowe not brynge hem at acorde and at rest, thane may the alderman [g] euen hem licence for to gone to the comown lawe.”‡

* *The Parish*, 22.

† The Sheriff’s County Court, might also, by virtue of a special writ called a *justicies*, (now totally out of use), entertain all personal actions to any amount.—*Stephen*, iii., 398.

‡ *English Gilda*, 279.

The STATUTES OF LABOURERS, from which I shall next quote, will be found collected in my *History of Freemasonry*.* In 1349, the wages of artificers, and the price of provisions, were regulated.† The following year it was further enacted that labourers should be sworn twice, and workmen once, in the year to conform to the two ordinances; the former before the Lords, Stowards, and bailiffs of every town, and the latter before the Justices. The statute also ordaining that, "if any of the said servants, labourers, or *artificers* do flee from one county to another, the Sheriff of the county where such fugitive persons shall be found shall do them to be taken at the commandment of the Justices of the counties from whence they shall flee.‡

Wages were again regulated in 1360, and "all alliances and covines of masons and carpenters, and congregations, chapters, ordinances, and oaths betwixt them made, or to be made," were pronounced "void and wholly annulled." Labourers were declared no longer punishable by "fine and ransom," and the Lords of Towns were empowered "to take and imprison them for fifteen days." Fugitive labourers and artificers absent either from their work or their places of abode, were "to be burned in the forehead with the letter F in token of Falsity," i.e., of having broken the oath they were compelled to take under the previous statute; and magistrates were directed, in case they fled into towns, to deliver them up.§

The Statutes of Labourers were further augmented between 1360 and 1389, in which latter year it was ordained that "the Justices should, at Easter and Michaelmas make proclamation how much each mason, carpenter, and other craftsman should take by the day between the two seasons." The next addition to the series was made in 1402, and in 1405-6 Henry IV. confirmed them,|| when it was enacted "that in every Leet, be it in the King's hand, or of any other, the King's Leige Man, once in the year all Labourers and Artificers dwelling in the same Leet shall be sworn, to serve and take for their service, after the Form of the said Statutes." The Laws we are considering were again extended in 1414, 1416, 1423, and 1425, the last named year being famous, as many will be aware, for the Statute 3 Hen. VI. c. 1, occasioned by the masons (to use the words of a *legal* writer) having held confederacies and meetings to concert schemes for opposing the Statutes of Labourers.¶

The 1st Chapter of the 3rd Statute passed in 1425, was printed in the last part, or number, of our *Transactions*.**

The Acts of Parliament above cited, by no means exhaust the series of these very arbitrary regulations, but the entire code upon which the title "Statutes of Labourers" is commonly bestowed, can be easily referred to by the minute fraction of readers who are alone interested in searching for new light, wherewith to illuminate the obscurity which at present overhangs the old written traditions of our Society.

It will be seen that from 1350, workmen (i.e., artificers or artisans) were to be annually sworn to observe certain statutory regulations—also, that in 1405-6, by a further enactment, the practice was included among the things that were regularly put before the sworn jury of freemen in the Leet; and which had to be everywhere answered.

Here it may be usefully observed that on the loss or decay of the Lord's Leet, or if it neglected its jurisdiction, the Sheriff's Tourn might take cognizance of it, so that no defect of justice should arise;†† and the Rolls of Parliament contain numerous illustrations of the erection of separate Leets, too hastily formed or without the true characteristics which the common law requires, being merged back into the hundreds and shires of which they had, at the first, been parts. Many large cities had also had that entireness of separate jurisdiction that they were not represented at all at the Shire-mote. These were recognised as shires within themselves, and, as a consequence, chose, and still choose, their own independent Sheriffs.‡‡

"London was divided into wards, answering to hundreds in the county; each having its own wardmote, or leet, under its elected alderman."§§

"There were certain districts locally included within the hundreds, which nevertheless constituted independent bodies politic. The burgesses, the tenants, the residents of the King's burghs and manors in ancient demesne, owed neither suit nor service to the hundred leet. They attended at their own leet, which differed in no essential respect from the leet of the hundred. The portreeve, constable, head-borough, bailiff, or other the chief executive magistrate, was elected or presented by the leet jury."|||

* chap. vii.

† 23 Edw. III.

‡ 25 Edw. III., Statute 2.

§ 34 Edw. III.

|| 7 Hen. IV., c. xvii.

¶ Reeves, *Hist. of English Law*, (1787) iii., 286.

** *A.Q.C.*, v. 89.

†† Smith, *Local Self-Government*, citing Glanville, de Logibus, lib. 1, c.c.i., 4; Hougham Magna, 10; and Coko, 4 Inst. 261, 267.

‡‡ *Local Self-Government*, 225.

§§ Hallam, *Middle Ages*, iii., 220.

||| Sir F. Palgrave, in *Edinburgh Review*, xxxvi., 309.

The procedure, therefore, must have varied in many instances according to the localities wherein the different bodies of Masons carried on or exercised their craft, neither should I be justified in leaving unnoticed the combined influence of the Statutes of Labourers (in their entirety), the abolition of Guilds, and the Statute of Apprentices—5 Eliz. c. iv.—which together with that of the Reformation, must have brought about a very considerable alteration in the conditions under which the Mason's trade was practised at the close of the 14th and beginning of the 15th centuries.

The twelfth and fifteenth "Points" in the poem, I regard as presenting us with what I shall call a closer approximation to a real picture of the annual "Assembly" attended by the Masons, than is discoverable in any other ancient document. The "Semblé," however, mentioned in lines 75, 261, and 471, is—in my judgment—either purely legendary, or at least stands on quite another footing. Masonic tradition, as exemplified by the prose constitutions, carries back the permission, or rather injunction, to hold a yearly Assembly, far beyond the time of Athelstan, and we find a similar privilege conferred upon the Mason's Craft by St. Alban, Charles Martel, Euclid, and Nimrod, all of which I deem to be of equal historic value with the accounts of the "Semblé" in certain parts of the poem. The view of *frank-pledge*—that is, enrolling all men in the bond of mutual *peace-pledge*—was, as we have seen, one principal object of the Sheriff's Tourn. By this was the roll made and kept perfect of all the men within the jurisdiction, who had mutual duties and responsibilities. What the versifier of the Regius MS. had before him, when he wrote his quaint lines, is, of course, pure matter of speculation. But he must have seen, I think (or had recited to him), some form (or forms) of the Manuscript Constitutions, and it is, indeed, quite possible that he may have rationalized some portion of their contents, by a slight paraphrase of the inculcations with regard to the Assembly. But this solution, however, plausible it may appear on a first view, would leave unexplained the singular entry in the Manuscript Constitutions, upon which I have already laid great stress, viz., the clause enjoining attendance at the Assembly, if held within a certain distance. Among the "forms" in which a fifty miles radius appears, is the Kilwinning MS., in the possession of the ancient Lodge of that name, which, as the article in question could have had no possible operation on North Britain, is alike noteworthy and suggestive. First of all, it affords further proof that all versions of the "Constitutions" were based on English originals, and in the second place it shows conclusively—in at all events, one instance—the unreality of the injunction, or to use other words, its obsolete or legendary character.* From this we gain the fact, that in one part of Britain, the disciplinary requirements in the Manuscript Constitutions, were as much a Guild Legend, as the so-called History of Masonry, related in the same documents.

In the south it must have been otherwise, but there is a long gap between *the actual dates as MSS.*, of the Masonic poem, and of the earliest "form" of the Manuscript Constitutions (the Grand Lodge MS.), to which that title is commonly applied. In the older of these writings, the allusions (in the 12th and 15th Points), to the Assembly refer, as I think (and have already expressed in more than one place) to the Court Leet of the Sheriff; but the practice I imagine to have become more variable in 1583, when in all, or nearly all, cases, the jurisdiction last referred to may have been succeeded by the Court Leet of the Steward. Nevertheless, the language of the Manuscript Constitutions remained as before, and a radius of a certain number of miles still continued to be the (ordinary) limit within which attendance was compulsory at the Assembly.

To the objection that I have not fully established my point, it may be replied,—when positive facts fail, there is room for a plausible conjecture. A slender clue may track a labyrinth, and to those who prefer darkness to light, I tender the consolation, that even should my humble argument blossom at any time into actual demonstration, there will still remain open—on a variety of points—an ample field of doubt, in which the Masonic antiquary can disport himself at pleasure.

It seems to me that the duty cast upon the Mason of those early times (1400 *circa*) to attend the "Assembly" was very analogous to—if indeed not identical with—that imposed upon him as one of the King's subjects, to be present at the Folk-mote. Both obligations arose out of his allegiance—concerning which it is somewhat quaintly expressed by an old writer, "If antiquities do make things more venerable, as most commonly it doth, this oath of natural *legiance* at the tourn and leet can plead as large prescription of its ancient and constant usage as any one thing in this nation, for it was first instituted

* See Lyon, *Hist. of Lodge of Edinburgh*, 65, 66.

by *K. Arthur*, at which time the *Leet* was called *Folkemote*, viz., a meeting of the people and this appellation is retained in *London* to this day."*

Mr. Toulmin Smith says:— No name was ever devised which more fully expressed a reality than the word *Folk-Mote*:—discussion by the assembled people. Throughout the Anglo-Saxon laws and long after the coming of William the First, we find continued allusion, by name, to the *Folk-Mote*† It was held sacred and inviolable. It was the duty of every man, and enforced by penalties, to attend his proper folk-mote, in order to discharge there the duties and responsibilities that attached to him as a member of the State.

In a writ of Henry I. to the Bishop, Sheriff, and Men of Worcester—A.D. 1108—there appears:— And I enjoin that *all the men of your Shire* go to the Shire-motes and Hundred-motes, as they did in the time of King Edward, under penalty of being put out of the King's peace; that is, of being out-lawed

There have been, from a very remote time, and as distinct things, Folk-motes of Shires, Cities, Boroughs, Hundreds, Wards, and Tythings. Tourns, Leets, Courts Baron, Precincts, and Parishes, may be added. Each of these last has also its peculiar Folk-mote."‡

A Discussion ensued, to which the following was

THE REPLY.

I shall do my best to express in a popular form, and devoid of technicalities, the conclusions I deem permissible from the evidence that has been adduced, together with, in some few instances, the directions in which they seem to point, and as it were, mutely encourage us to proceed still farther along the path of discovery.

In the first place, I think there can be no doubt whatever that, in the fourteenth century, a strictly Masonic Assembly, to which persons repaired from a distance, would have been a downright impossibility. It is proverbially hard to prove a negative, but, not to multiply evidence, I shall rest this part of my argument, on the Statutes of the Realm, and Wylie's *History of England under Henry IV.* To understand whether a particular event could have happened in an age remote to our own, that age should be studied, and if any brother *after* studying the history of the fourteenth century, tells me that he believes in the possibility of purely Masonic Assemblies having then taken place, I will not argue any further with him.

The Regius MS. reflects the procedure of the fourteenth century, or it may be earlier. *Punctus Undecimus* has been cited by Fort, who observes on the authority of the *Archæologia*§ that "until the close of the twelfth century stones were hewn out with an adze. About this time a chisel was introduced, and superseded the hewing of stone. Thus we see that the words 'hew a stone,' had descended from the twelfth century at least, to the period when the [Regius] manuscript was copied, and, being found in the roll before the copyist were also transcribed."||

The clause in the Manuscript Constitutions relating to the radius within which attendance was required at the Assembly, seems to me to be a kind of petrified tradition handed down from stage to stage (*i.e.*, from copyist to copyist) long after its original meaning had been forgotten.

In a book before me, I find,—“Egypt often *fossilised* rather than destroyed the earlier stages alike of her civilization and her art”;¶ and again,—“This is a small but significant example of the conservatism of Egypt, whereby she progressed, *not by supplanting one custom by another, but by enveloping the old in the new.*”**

After the same manner, I believe that many of the old laws or disciplinary regulations of the early Masons became fossilized or petrified, or in other words, that they passed out of use, though retaining their hold on the written and unwritten traditions of the Society. Also, I think we may safely assume, on even stronger grounds, that a parallel for the ‘Conservatism of Egypt’ referred to above, may be found in the customs of our own Craft—which in their descending course, I venture to lay down with confidence, were not supplanted, “the one by another,” but the entire body of them “progressed” to its ulti-

* Powell, *Jurisdiction of the Ancient Courts of Leet, or Views of Franck Pledge*, 1642, 19.

† Mote, *i.e.*, moot,—discussion. Such meetings were formerly all called *Folk-motes*, that is, meetings of the folk to deliberate. There was the *Shire-mote*, the *Hundred-mote*, the *Borough-mote*, and the *Parish-mote*. *Folk-mote* is generic; the others specific.—*The Parish*, 57.

‡ *Local Self-Government*, 214, 218, 221.

§ *ix.*, 112, 113.

|| *Early Hist. and Antiq. of Freemasonry*, 117, 118.

¶ Conway, *Dawn of Art in the Ancient World*, 88.

** *Ibid.*, 61.

mate destination, the purely speculative Masonry of our own times, 'by enveloping the old in the new.'

It is probable that in many cases—and we shall do well to recollect that "skilled artisans were confined to the towns"—the head meeting day of the Guilds and Crafts, may have coincided with the Leet, or Law day, at which the annual View of Frank Pledge was held. Colour is lent to this supposition by various entries in Smith's *English Gilds* (q.v.); Harleian MS. No. 2054 (Brit. Mus. collection); Brand's *Hist. and Antiq. of Newcastle*; Herbert's *Companies of London*, and other works. For Municipal purposes, the various fraternities often combined, and in Worcester were styled the "Gild Merchant," while their "Articles" (or ordinances) were to "be openly redde and declared at euery lawday next after the feste of Seynt Michell the Archangelle, yf it be desired,"*

The theme is a tempting one, but I must leave it in order to find room for some remarks that arise out of the eloquent address of Dr. Barlow, on retiring from the chair of St. Alban, No. 38, under the registry of South Australia. Our Brother observes,— "The defect of these *Transactions* [2076]—if it be permissible to specify one defect amid so much surpassing excellence—is the singular dearth of papers on Masonic Jurisprudence, the subject of which seems to engage so much of the highest thought among our Brethren in America, which is of such vast importance to Freemasons, especially to those of them whom distance keeps out of touch with Masonic knowledge at its central source."†

Now in his *Report on Foreign Correspondence*, for 1891, Bro. W. R. Singleton, Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge, District of Columbia, U.S.A., contended that Anthony Sayer (1717) was the first Grand Master of Masons, and printed a letter from myself in support of such position.‡ His observations on this subject were commented upon by Bro. Josiah H. Drummond, P.G.M. of Maine, and Reporter on Foreign Correspondence for the Grand Lodge of that State (1892).

The latter Brother expressed himself at great length, maintaining that the General Regulations (contained in pp. 58-70 of the first Book of Constitutions) were not *enacted*, between 1717-23, but *compiled as existing law*, and states,— "This exposition would not be complete without calling attention to the difference between the functions of the Historian and those of the Jurist. The Historian is at perfect liberty to question statements of facts in his effort to discover the very truth. But when certain propositions are assumed to be facts in the enactment of a law, the Jurist, in construing the law, is bound by such assumed facts, and it makes no difference whether they are facts or not; he is 'bound by the record.' If it were possible that Dr. Anderson manufactured these regulations 'out of whole cloth,' but they were made, received, and recognised as a compilation of ancient usages, laws, constitutions, &c., then they must be read and expounded as if they were in fact such a compilation. When they are received as the law of the Craft in later days they must be read and expounded by the same rule. Whatever powers these regulations recognise as possessed by the Grand Master as inherent in the office, must be held to be possessed by him, without regard to what the Historian may believe the actual fact was.

"We have carefully read and considered what Bro. Gould has written, and while no one exceeds us in our admiration of the diligence and perseverance with which he has collected his evidence, and the ability with which he sustains his conclusions, we are compelled to say, that if the case were presented to a judicial tribunal, examining it according to the rules which the wisdom of Ages has established, in our opinion, Bro. Gould would be sent out of Court as utterly failing to overcome the case which the record makes against him."§

The more than kindly sentiments which Bro. Drummond expresses with regard to myself, I heartily reciprocate, his portrait faces me as I write, and his latest Report on Correspondence always lies close to my hand.

Hence, I feel sure, that being unable to reproduce his observations in their entirety, he will acquit me of intentionally misrepresenting them, should I accidentally fall into this error. But to lessen the possibility of my so doing, I shall content myself with adding, that he affirms what I deny, namely, the existence of Grand Masters, and Annual Assemblies, of Freemasons, *prior* to the formation of the Grand Lodge of England in 1717. Also, that according to his view, Dr. Anderson's two "Books of Constitutions" having been accepted as authentic by the Grand Lodge, the Jurist (though not the Historian) is prevented from going beyond, or behind them.

* *Eng. Gilds.*, 376.

† *Ante*, 56.

‡ *Proc. G. L. Dis. Columbia* (1891). App. 66.

§ *Proc. G.L. Maine* (1892), 597.

The latter position I shall now examine, not from any wish to break a lance with Bro. Drummond, but with the desire of showing Dr. Barlow the extreme difficulty of *even laying a foundation* for the study or discussion of Masonic Jurisprudence in the columns of *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum*.

Let us suppose, for instance, that the Constitutions of 1723 and 1738, are to be taken as the basis of Masonic History and Masonic Law—what follows? According to the 1st edition there were two degrees, according to the 2nd, there were three. Moreover in various other ways they exhibit discrepancies. If you accept one you must throw over the other, and to believe *both* would be confusion worse confounded.

There are three entries in the Constitutions of 1738, to which attention may be directed.

The first at p. 74, reciting the Statute of 3 HEN. vi., c. 1,—“Whereas by yearly Congregations and Confederacies made by the Masons in their *General Assemblies*, etc.”

The second at p. 100, purporting to be an extract from the Diary of Elias Ashmole, wherein that worthy is supposed to say that he was made a Free Mason at Warrington, “by Mr. Richard Penket the Warden, and the Fellow Crafts (there mention'd) on 16 Oct., 1646.”

The third at page 71, being the alleged extracts from “an old Record” which I have already set out on the right hand of the parallel columns where passages from the Cooke MS.* and the Constitutions 1738, are shown together in the body of my paper (§ § 2-5).

Now to begin with, I don't think it will be contended by the stoutest believers in the authority of Dr. Anderson's Constitutions, that by misstating the Laws of the Land, they alter them accordingly; nor that we are thereby prevented from going to the Statute Book direct, as the original fount of information. *There* we find, instead of the words “made by the Masons in their *General Assemblies*,” the following “faitz par les Masons en leur generalx *Chapitres assemblez*,” and it will hardly require pointing out, that there is a difference between “General Assemblies,” and “Chapters Assembled.”

Secondly, Elias Ashmole, in his diary, tells us, under Oct. 16th, 1646,—“I was made a Free Mason at Warrington ... The names of those that were then of the Lodge [were] Mr. Rich Penket Warden, Mr. James Collier, Mr. Rich. Sankey, Henry Littler, John Ellam, Rich Ellam & Hugh Brewer.”†

Here there is no mention of “Fellow Crafts,” a *Scottish* expression, which is not met with in *English* Masonry, until its appearance in the first Book of Constitutions (1723), and I suppose it will not be argued, in regard to the discrepant statements by Ashmole and Anderson, that in the matter of the Diary, the latter was really the better authority of the two?

Thirdly, then, we come to the Cooke MS., together with the extreme latitude which Dr. Anderson allowed himself when *translating* it, and the question next arises, can we examine the original document for ourselves, or are we bound to accept the false colouring it has received at the hands of Dr. Anderson?

For my own part, I deem it quite as unreasonable to be “bound by the record,” *i.e.*, by the “Constitutions,” 1738, in the case of the Cooke MS., as in those of the Stat. 3 HEN. VI., and the diary of Elias Ashmole. Dr. Barlow, in the Address to which I have referred, alludes to Masonic Jurisprudence, as engaging “so much of the highest thought among our Brethren in America.” The great ability of the “Corps of Reporters,” I should be the last person to deny, though I must qualify my admiration of it, by the frank confession that it seems to me to be occasionally very uselessly expended.

The writers on Jurisprudence, have, indeed, reared very stately theories, but according to my poor judgment, on very insecure, not to say treacherous foundations. To quote a saying of Rousseau,

“*You cannot hinder an earthquake by building a city near a burning mountain.*”

The spirit of Inquiry is abroad, and neither the writings of Dr. Anderson, or of other commentators, will be allowed to block the way, when there are opportunities of consulting at first hand, the original authorities upon which he and they have exercised, in so many instances, a very perverse ingenuity.

These “authorities” are the Ancient Manuscripts of the Craft, whose importance as the oldest depositaries of the traditions we have inherited, I shall hope, at some future date, to again recommend alike to the consideration of the Historian, the Jurist, and the Student of Freemasonry.

* *Lines*, 711-27; 901-12; 912-17; and 930-60.

† From a facsimile plate, published by Mr. W. H. Gee, Oxford.

POSTSCRIPT.—Article XIX. of the GENERAL REGULATIONS (*Constitutions* 1723, pp. 58-70) runs :—“ If the Grand Master should abuse his Power, and render himself unworthy of the Obedience and Subjection of the Lodges, he shall be treated in a way and manner to be agreed upon in a *New Regulation* ; because hitherto the ancient Fraternity have had no occasion for it, their former Grand Masters having all behaved themselves worthy of that honourable office.”

The “ former Grand Masters ” referred to, were held by Bro. W. R. Singleton,* to mean Anthony Sayer (1717) and his immediate successors, an opinion in which I concur. But with regard to it, Bro. Josiah H. Drummond observes :—“ We have heard of splitting fine hairs, but this is the most extraordinary exploit in that direction of which we ever heard, and it commands our unbounded admiration ! ”

I have quoted the above, from a desire to place before Bro. Drummond, the *main* point, whereupon we differ in our estimate of the GENERAL REGULATIONS. These, it is true, are stated to have been “ compiled first by Mr. George Payne, *Anno* 1720,’ but in the introductory note we are told :—“ The Author of this Book has compar’d them with, and reduc’d them to the Ancient Records and immemorial Usages of the Fraternity, and *digested them into this new Method* [italics mine], with several proper Explications, for the Use of the Lodges in and about London and Westminster.”†

Now the *point* between Bro. Drummond and myself, is the latitude which Dr. Anderson allowed himself, in *digesting* the materials that were laid before him ; and passing over the internal evidence (of which the use of the *Scottish* term “ Fellow Craft ” is a convenient example) afforded by the REGULATIONS themselves, of the Doctor’s own handiwork, I cannot help believing that having played such pranks with other documents, where there have been facilities for tracing them, he must have done the same thing in cases of a like nature, though there is a lack of evidence to clearly establish his delinquencies.

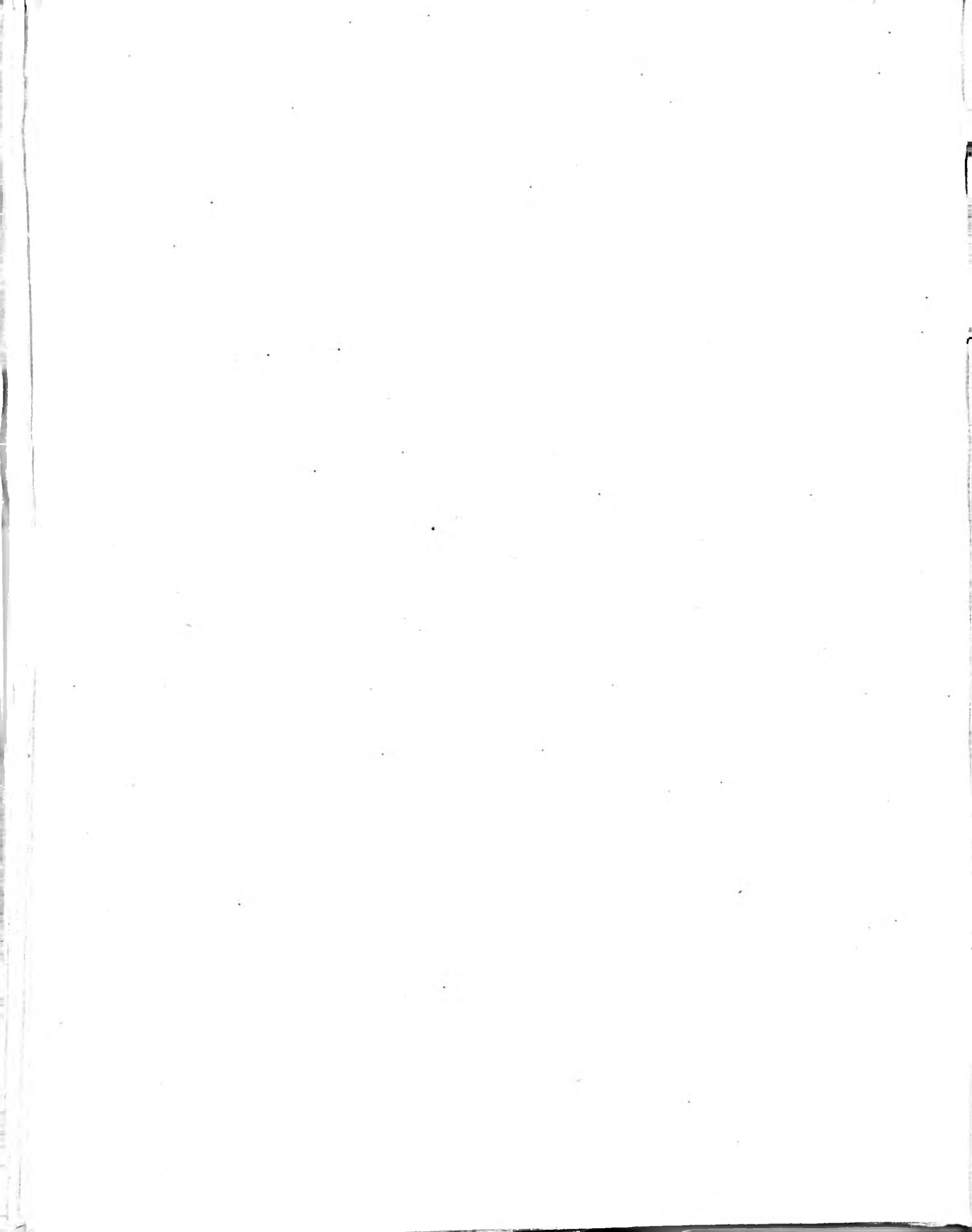
* *Proc. G.L. Dis. Columb.* (1891), 66.

† *Constit.* (1723), 58.

IV.

ON SOME OLD SCOTTISH MASONIC
CUSTOMS.

[*Ars Quatuor Coronatorum*, 1886.]



ON SOME OLD SCOTTISH MASONIC CUSTOMS.

[A. Q. C. 1886.]

From the operation of causes, which can only form the subject of conjecture, the greater number of the additional ceremonies, adopted in many quarters as Masonic, and labelled the "High Degrees," have been described as of Scottish origin.* Indeed, not content with this, as St. Andrew was the patron Saint of Scotland, and of the Lodges† there, the new degrees manufactured in France were called not alone Scotch, but St. Andrew's degrees.‡ These *Scots* degrees, as I have elsewhere ventured to term them in contradistinction to the ceremonies actually practised by *Scottish* Masons, appear to have sprung up about the year 1740, in all parts of France.§ From the circumstances that Scots Masonry was unknown before the delivery by the Chevalier Ramsay of his famous Oration in 1737, and appeared shortly afterwards, the two have been represented as cause and effect. Many other reasons might, with equal plausibility, be assigned for the French Masons fathering their new rites on Scotland. For example, the long and intimate connection between the two countries, or possibly the halo of romance cast upon the formation of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, by the pre-arranged drama in which William St. Clair, the first Grand Master, secured his election by magnanimously resigning an obsolete office in Operative Masonry—gave the whole affair a sort of legal aspect which was wanting at the institution of the Grand Lodge of England.|| But the most ingenious speculation of all has been made by a learned German, the Rev. G. A. Schiffmann, who considers that the Scots Masters at first formed no degree, and claimed no superiority, being a sort of volunteer inspectors who banded together to reform many abuses which had crept into the Craft; that their names *maitres écossais* is a corruption of their special token, the acacia, whence they were called *maitres acassois*, and that they ultimately developed into a separate degree.¶

The belief, however, that Scotland was the original home of higher and more sublime degrees than the simple THREE of the Craft, took firm root. In Continental Europe, besides the legion of Scots degrees, we find the Strict Observance and the (so-called) Royal Order of Scotland, each placing its origin in North Britain. A still later example of the common practice of affecting a connection with Scotland, is afforded by a well-known and highly flourishing rite—the "Ancient and Accepted *Scottish* Rite, 33°." But even stranger still, in Scotland itself, where at least those who profess to write Masonic history should steer clear of delusions, for which there is not one atom of foundation; we find it gravely stated in 1859, by the then Grand Secretary of that kingdom, "That the Ancient Mother Kilwinning Lodge *certainly* possessed in former times other degrees of Masonry than those of St. John."***

Yet, as a simple matter of fact, the *only* degree (of a speculative or symbolical character) known in the early Masonry of Scotland, was that in which the legend of the Craft was read, and the benefit of the MASON WORD conferred. The *second* degree—as now practised—did not exist in Scotland, or at least there is no evidence to justify a contrary belief, until several years after the formation of the Grand Lodge of England (1717), and the *third* is mentioned for the first time (in the North) in the minutes of Lodge Canongate Kilwinning, on March 31st, 1735. No further degrees were recognised by the Grand Lodge of Scotland as Masonic until 1860, when that of the Mark was pronounced "to be a second part of the Fellow-Craft Degrees," though singularly enough, it can be conferred on Master Masons only.††

In 1872 the Past Master's ceremonial of installation also received a qualified recognition, that is to say, the Grand Lodge did so, *not* for the purpose of introducing a new degree in Freemasonry, but to authorise the ritual of installed Master, as used in England, and to

* Findel p. 254; Gould, chap. xxiv., *passim*. † Gould, chap. xxiii., p. 52.

‡ Findel, *loc. cit.* § Gould, chap. xxiv., p. 92.

|| Ibid., chap. xxiii., p. 51.

¶ Ibid., chap. xxiv., p. 92.

*** Laurie, p. 93. In the list of Grades, Rites, and Sects given in the Acta Latomorum of Thory, there is no less than seventy-one entries, under the word "Écossais."

†† Gould, chap. xxiii., p. 75.

remove the disqualification which prevented Scottish Past Masters from being present at the installation of Masters in English Lodges. The Royal Arch is as yet unrecognised as a degree.

Having shewn that the leading characteristic of early Scottish Masonry was its extreme simplicity, there is another popular error to which I must briefly call attention before proceeding with the main subject of this paper.

It has been somewhat too confidently assumed that the early Lodge ceremonies in North and South Britain were identical, and, jumping at this conclusion, writers of the Craft have, in too many cases, accepted Dr. Anderson's two Books of Constitutions 1723 and 1738—as presenting a picture of the Freemasonry existing—that is so far as its main features are concerned—in both divisions of the United Kingdom.

Now, without going into details, which would take me into a dissertation on English, rather than upon Scottish Masonic Customs, and far exceed the limits very properly prescribed for the papers to be read in this Lodge, I may be allowed to postulate, that so far back as it is possible to institute any comparison between the two systems of Masonry—English and Scottish—*viz.*, in the seventeenth century, they were very dissimilar. It is true the evidence with regard to England is meagre, but still it ought to have some weight, and more especially since nothing can be thrown into the opposite scale. We find then at the period named, that whilst the English Lodges (of which we possess any trace)* were composed almost, if not exclusively, of speculative (or non-working) Masons, the Lodges in Scotland existed for trade purposes, of which the necessity must have passed away, or at least has been unrecorded in the South.†

At this point, when I shall proceed to treat the subject of Scottish *Masonry* as something separate and distinct from the Freemasonry of England, the following quotation as bearing upon the much disputed point whether the Masonry of these Islands received at any time a Gallic or a German tinge—will not be out of place. “The Conquest of the South” [in 1066] says Mr. J. Hill Burton, “of course changed its position towards the North, England became Normanized, while Scotland not only retained her old Teutonic character, but became a place of refuge for the Saxon fugitives.”‡

The most complete picture we possess of the early Masonry of Scotland is afforded by the Schaw Statutes of 1598 and 1599.§ From these two codes we learn very little with regard to the entry of Apprentices—simply that in each case it was booked—but on other points they are more diffuse. Thus a master or Fellow Craft was to be received or admitted, in the presence of Six Masters and two entered Apprentices, his name and mark was also to be booked, together with the names of those by whom he was admitted, and of his intenders (or instructors). No one was to be admitted, according to the earlier code, without an essay and sufficient trial of his skill and worthiness in his vocation and Craft, or, according to the later one, without a sufficient essay and proof of memory and art of Craft. A further regulation requires an annual trial of the art of memory and science thereof, of every Fellow Craft and Apprentice, according to their vocations, under a penalty if any of the members shall have lost one point thereof.

The terms or expressions, Master Masons, Fellow Craft, Entered Apprentices, and Cowan, are also mentioned in the Schaw Statutes, and appear from documentary evidence to have been in common use in Scotland from the year 1598 down to our times.||

The Grand Lodge of Scotland was established in 1736, but for a great many years it stood on a very anomalous footing with regard to the private Lodges in that kingdom. Besides “Mother Kilwinning” and her offshoots there were several Lodges who never joined the Grand Lodge at all, whilst others did so and retired, though of the latter some renewed their allegiance. Thus the Haughfoot Lodge (1702)¶ never resigned its independence, Glasgow, St. John (1628) only came in in 1850, and the Lodge of Melrose still declines to recognise any superior authority to its own. The “Company of Atcheson Haven” (1601-1602), retired in 1737, and only returned to the fold in 1814. The “Ancient Lodge Dundee” (1628) appears not to have definitely joined the new organisation until 1745, whilst other Lodges came in the following order:—St. Machar (1749), 1753; St. John's Kelso (1701), 1754; St. Ninian's, Brechin (1714), 1756; and the Lodge of Dunblane (1696), in 1760. The Lodge of Scoon and Perth—the date of whose origin, and the period of whose secession, I am equally unable to define—retired from the Grand Lodge, and was not re-admitted until 1808.

* Ibid, chap. xvi., p. 258.

† Ibid, chap. xvi., p. 258; xxiii., p. 47.

‡ Burton, “The Scot Abroad,” i., p. 5.

§ Lyon pp. 9-14.

|| Ibid., pp. 9-14.

¶ Gould, chap. xvi., p. 319.

The figures within parenthesis denote the years to which the existence of the several Lodges can be carried back by the evidence of authentic documents.

It has therefore seemed to me that a few notes on the customs of the old Scottish Lodges may be of interest, as being in many cases survivals of usages pre-dating the era of Grand Lodges, and in others illustrative of the procedure under a system of Masonry, which only gradually ceased to be mainly operative in its leading features.

The accumulated labours of Masonic critics have succeeded in clearing up many difficulties ; but in some instances they have failed, and have left the inquirer bewildered and perplexed. Of this we have an example in the varied interpretation which has been placed on the most ancient documents of the Craft, and a familiar instance is afforded by the irreconcilable conclusions at which Bros. Woodford, Speth, and myself have severally arrived after a careful collation of Harleian MS., No. 1942, with other specimens of the " Old Charges."

In all cases of this kind, we should do well to recollect, however, what has been carefully paid down, by a great authority on usages of a bye-gone era. " An obsolete custom," it has been well said, " or some forgotten circumstance, opportunely adverted to, will sometimes restore its true perspicuity and credit to a very intricate passage."*

The quaint customs enjoined by the Schaw Statutes were continued, with more or less exactitude, by the lodges until late in the eighteenth century, and of their survival into more recent times some examples will be presently given.

Stress must be laid on the fact that the associations of brethren were *Mason Lodges*, not Societies of *Freemasons*. In the Lodge of Edinburgh we only meet with the term " Freemason "—in the sense it is now employed—in 1725, whilst the adoption ten years later by the Lodge of Kilwinning of the distinguishing title of Freemasons, and its reception of symbolical Masonry, were of simultaneous occurrence. The same may be said of Canon-gate Kilwinning.† The minutes of the last named Lodge contain the earliest Scottish record extant of the admission of a Master Mason under the Modern Masonic Constitution. This occurred on March 31st, 1735. The third degree is referred to for the first time in the following minutes of Lodges:—Mother Kilwinning and the Lodge of Aberdeen, 1736 ; Lodge of Edinburgh, 1738 ; Lodge of Kelso, 1754 ; and Lodge of Glasgow, 1767. The Lodges of Acheson's Haven, Dunblane, Haughfoot, and Peebles, were unacquainted with it in 1760, and the degree was not generally worked in Scottish Lodges until the seventh decade of the eighteenth century.‡

Examinations of the " last entered apprentices and others," to ascertain what progress they had made under their respective Intenders, continued to take place in the Lodge of Kelso, on St. John's Day, until 1741, and probably later.§ The appointment of instructors has for a century and a half obtained in the Lodge of Peebles. The minutes of the Lodge of Dunblane, in 1725, define the duty of *Intender* to be " the perfecting of apprentices so that they might be fitt for their future tryalls." In connection with this last phrase, the highest authority on the subject of Scottish Masonry has observed : " A parallel to the Essay-pieces of Operative Craftsmen is presented in the examination for advancement in Lodges of Freemasons—tests which, in the inflated language of the Masonic diplomas of the last century, were characterized as the ' wonderful tryalls ' which the neophyte had had the fortitude to sustain before attaining to the ' sublime degree of Master Mason.' "¶

In 1738, a meeting of the Lodge of Aberdeen was held by summons of the J.W.—James Catanach, advocate, who, it may be observed, was not " admitted" a Master Mason until December 24th, 1739. This office-bearer was " entered and past " May 9th, 1736, elected J.W. 1737, and Master of the Lodge December 27th, 1739. In the last-named year, essays were first named in these records, though the usage must have been one of much older standing. The entry runs—December 24th, 1739—" The said day, upon a petition given in by Peter Forsyth, entered Apprentice, craving to be admitted to said Lodge as a Fellow Craft, upon which an essay was presented [*viz.*], an Arch six foot wide and an [*one*] foot below the semicircle, and to mark moulds for the same, and appointed Alexander Hector and John Murdoch, Essay Masters, and James Beltie, Overman, and to be performed against the 27th day of said month." On the St. John's Day ensuing " the Essay Masters foresaid presented to the Lodge the said Peter Forsyth, his Essay, and the same was approved of, and he was received as a fellow Craft, having paid all dues conform to the Acts of the Lodge."¶¶

* Burder, *Oriental Customs*, i. (1802) title page.

† Lyon, p. 80.

‡ Gould, chap. xvi., p. 312.

§ Vernon, *History of the Lodge of Kelso*, p. 28. ¶ Lyon, pp. 18, 21.

¶¶ The Notes on the Aberdeen Lodges are based on the Aberdeen Masonic Reporter, 1878-81 ; Regulations of the Aberdeen Mason Lodge, 1853, and extracts from the records of No. 34, made by Mr. John Jameson, P.M., and placed at my disposal by Hughan.

The Essay or Master-piece is first referred to in the records of the Lodge of Edinburgh in the year 1683.

So late as 1842 Mr. Andrew Kerr, draughtsman and architect, who had been bred a wright, was required by the Journeyman Lodge, No. 8, to produce an Essay-piece, before he could be accepted as an Operative, and elected to the office of Master. He accordingly equipped himself with a Mason's apron, and took his place in a Mason's shed, where he prepared a window sill of Binning-stone, which was passed by the Inspectors and declared satisfactory by the Lodge.*

The Domestic and Geomatic elements were kept quite distinct in the Lodge of Aberdeen, and whilst the Master was generally taken from the former class, the Senior Warden, from a very early period, and until the year 1840, was invariably selected from the latter.

Deacons are found among the office-bearers in 1740, but without the prefix of "Senior" or "Junior," which are not met with until 1743.

According to the Rules and Orders (1752) there were monthly meetings, the Lodge hours being from six to nine in winter, and from seven to ten in summer. Non-attendance involved a fine of a penny. Each member was "obliged to spend three pence and no more," and "not to join any company after the Lodge broke up." During the sittings, the Master was "covered," and the Members not. Drunkenness in the Lodge was punished by a forfeit of two-pence.

Further regulations were enacted in 1754, whereby Apprentices were forbidden to undertake work of the value of ten, and Fellow Crafts of the value of thirty, merks Scots, for periods of three and one year respectively, which were to intervene before the former class could be "past" or the latter "admitted Masters." These laws were repealed in 1778. Extra Essays were at the same time appointed for the Fellow Crafts, consisting of models in clay, etc. It may be stated that whilst no operative was permitted to receive any degree without the production of an Essay-piece, the Geomatic brethren were not subject to this requirement. Thus in 1780, an Apprentice having applied to be passed and raised, because although admitted as an operative, he had declined the trade, was "admitted *on the usual bond*, that if ever he resumed the trade he would undertake to perform the customary Essays."

The first mention of the three degrees having been given at the same meeting, occurs under the year 1772, but the ordinary practice (in the case of Geomatic brethren) was to confer the first degree alone and the other two together. In the Lodge of St. Machar—also at Aberdeen—up to the year 1775, 200 members took the first degree, and only 137 the other ones. In this Lodge (1760) the Master named two deputies and the Wardens one each to officiate in their absence. A Depute Master was added to the list of officers in 1758, and before this—in the Lodge of Aberdeen, No. 34—the Senior Warden acted as such, and signed accordingly "D.M." Among the books of No. 34 is one entitled "List of members belonging to the Royal Arch Lodge, Aberdeen." It contains the names of 89 members. The first date in the book is 1762, and the last 1788.†

The Laws of St. John's Operative Lodge, Seatoun, Banff, present a good picture of the condition of Scottish Masonry in one part of the kingdom in 1765.

The Lodge met monthly. The expenses were paid by those present, and attendance was optional, unless the members were specially summoned. The Annual Festival was held December 27th, when all outstanding dues were required to be settled. The Quarterly Payments were: "Operative" Masons, threepence; and "Geomatical" Masons, four-pence sterling. The former master named his successor, and the choice was either approved or anew Master balloted for. Within the same limitations the latter chose his wardens. The admission was by petition, and the fees charged were higher in the case of "Geomatical" Masons, who, moreover, could not be entered, passed, or raised without "Readie Money," though the apprentice of an Operative Mason, on giving good security, was allowed credit until the St. John's Day next after his entry.‡ The Lodge of Kelso also took bills from candidates for their fees, as will appear from the specimens produced.§ This system of payment by intrants, though subsequently discountenanced by the Grand Lodge, had been practised by the Lodges of Kilwinning, Acheson's Haven, Haddington, and Dunblane, so far back as the first half of the seventeenth century.||

* Hunter, History of the Lodge of Journeymen Masons, No. 8, p. 70.

† See p. 107, last note.

‡ Freemason, March 20th, 1869; Masonic Magazine, vol. ii., pp. 34, 36.

§ Kelso MS. Records.

|| Lyon, p. 129.

No member of the Banff Lodge—who was not an Operative—could be either Master or Office-bearer (1765); whilst in the Journeymen Lodge, on September 11th, 1753, it was enacted that not more than eleven non-operatives in all, should be admitted as members, and that none of them should be elected to any office. This was, subsequently, so far modified that one theoretic brother was admitted to every ten operatives.*

The Lodge of Glasgow was exclusively operative, and remained so until about 1842. In this Lodge, in 1788, the office-bearers were a Grand Master, four Masters, two Wardens, two box Masters, and a Secretary or Clerk. The two brethren next in rank to the "Grand Master," were also respectively designated High Steward and Cornet.†

The seventh of the Banff regulations for 1765 provides that "any member who wants to attain to the parts of the Royal Arch and Super-Excellent, shall pay two shillings and sixpence to the Public Fund for each part." In 1778, in the records of the same Lodge, we meet with the degrees of Mark Mason and Mark Master; in 1782 of Knight Templar; and in 1794 of Knight of Malta. These novelties were disseminated, not only among the members, but also among other Lodges. Thus we find the Fraserburgh Lodge in 1799 requesting the high degrees of Royal Arch, Super-Excellent, Knight Templar, and Knight of Malta; and it was "agreed to give them their request, on paying into the Fund three pounds sterling."

The gratuitous initiation or affiliation of clergymen was a prevailing custom, and we find instances of it at Kilwinning, 1766; Aberdeen, 1778; and at Edinburgh, 1807. The following is the entry under the year 1766:—"Dec. 20. Mr. Alexander Gillies, Preacher of the Gospel, formerly entered in another Lodge, having this day preached before the brethren, in the Church of Kilwinning, to their great edification, and with universal applause—the brethren, in consideration of the learning, sobriety, and *sound divinity* of the said Mr. Gillies, Do unanimously admit him as an Honorary Member of the Lodge of Kilwinning."‡

In the records of the Lodge of Edinburgh, the words "made" and "accepted" are frequently used to indicate the admission of Fellow Crafts. The former expression—*made*—which is now synonymous with entered or initiated, was used but rarely to denote the entry of apprentices. The same word is to be met with in Scottish Acts of Parliament, as expressive of admission to membership in any of the burghal Guilds. At the close of the seventeenth century "passed" was substituted for "made," and for either of these expressions the Scribes of the Lodge used the word "accepted" as an equivalent; but though also used by them sometimes to denote the affiliation of a brother belonging to another Lodge, in no instance is it ever associated with the adoption of non-operatives into Masonic fellowship.§ At Aberdeen, again, as late as 1779, the term *initiated* was often used as synonymous with *admitted*, and the former expression was even applied to joining Master Masons.||

In some Lodges there was a recognized "initiator," styled the "Pass Master"—who was elected with the other officers. At Ayr Kilwinning he ranked after the Junior Steward, and in Lodge Beith St. John, after the Inner Guard. In the latter he received—and possibly still receives—for every inrant, one shilling from the Lodge as a recompense for his services.¶

There was an ancient ceremony called "Fencing the Lodge," which may be briefly alluded to. It consisted of prayer to God, and the purging by oath of the brethren from undue partiality in consideration of matters coming before them, as courts of Operative Masonry, and the custom was regularly observed in the Lodge of Edinburgh, in Mother Kilwinning,** and in the Lodge of Peebles, from its foundation in 1718 down to the end of the century.††

In the minutes of the Lodge of Dunblane, November 28th, 1721, there is a singular entry:—"Compeared James Eason, who was formerly entered as a prentice in our Lodge, and being examined was duely past from the Square to the Compass, and from an entered prentice to a Fellow of Craft."‡‡ This may indicate a very early assimilation of the English practice with regard to degrees, though the entry cited should be read with a curious

* Hunter, p. 73.

† Lyon, p. 413.

‡ Lyon, History of Mother Kilwinning (Freemason's Magazine, N.S., vol. ix., 1863, p. 434).

§ Lyon, p. 76.

|| See page 12, col. ii., note 1.

¶ Lyon, "Ears of Wheat from a Cornucopia" (Freemason's Magazine, July to December, 1866, p. 303).

** Sept. 18th, 1735—"The Court being duly Fenc'd and Lodge opened, Hugh Roger, Esq., Late Provost in Glasgow, and Alexander Coulter, Joynor there, were admitted Freemasons and Members of this Lodge, in the Quality and Rank of Apprentices in due form (Lyon, History of Mother Kilwinning, Freemason's Magazine, N.S., vo. ix., p. 233).

†† Lyon, p. 131.

‡‡ Ibid., 416.

passage in a copy of the "Old Charges"—the Melrose MS.—of the year 1674, though its *reading* probably dates from 1581, wherein there is also a highly significant allusion to the emblems of our art. This enjoins that "no frie mason," employing "Loses" (Cowans) ought to let them know "ye privilege of ye compass, square, levell, and ye plumb-rule."*

Some other customs deserve a passing mention. In the Lodge of St. Abb, Eyemouth, No. 70, during the years 1757-63, a frequent entry records that prior to closing "the Lodge was entertained by vocal and instrumental musick, and the anthem sung."† In the Lodge of Atcheson Haven—and it should be recollected that it was the tenacious adherence of this Lodge to *old customs* which led to its withdrawal from the newly-formed Grand Lodge‡—in 1758, the way of sitting was thus prescribed:—"That the deacon and Warden for the time being shall sitt in the most conspicuous place of the room and table where the said meeting is held, and that the late deacon and the four managers shall have their seats next or nearest to the said deacon or Warden, and that none of the rest of the brethren shall offer to take the place of them, but to take their places as they come, always leaving room for the above-mentioned brethren, so that no interruption may happen in discussing the business belonging to the Lodge.§

Irregular "Makings" continue to disfigure the practice of Scottish Masonry until the second decade of the present century. Under the Lodge of Kilwinning the usage prevailed until it became a constant habit for the individual operator to regard the entry money as the perquisite of his office.

By one of her daughter Lodges leave was given in 1765 to ordinary members resident at a distance of more than three miles from where the box was kept to enter persons to the Lodge.||

In 1783—February 28th—Samuel Gordon was deputed by the Lodge of Aberdeen to go to Inverurie and "enter as many people as incline to be received Masons," and appears to have found nine customers, who paid 5s. 8d. apiece, and received all three degrees.¶

In St. Andrew's Lodge, No. 228—also at Aberdeen—instituted in 1809, brethren could be appointed to act as Deputy Masters in their respective districts, with power, apparently, to initiate members—making reports half-yearly to the Lodge.**

The practice of private members making Masons at sight, without advising with, or acquainting the Master or other office-bearers, was complained of in the Lodge of Edinburgh in 1767, as having led to the admission of "some persons of low character, bad morals, and under age."††

Of the use to which fees obtained in this manner were frequently applied, a good example is given in the records of St. John's Old Kilwinning, at Inverness. On March 25th, 1757, John Tulloch was put to the award for having "received, entered, and admitted" four apprentices, without the advice and consent of the Master and Wardens. He was severely censured for this irregular proceeding, and ordered to pay to the Treasurer the dues of their entry: but John's reply was—"That for the two former, he can give no other account of the fees due to the Lodge, than *that he drunk it.*"†† Although it seems incredible, it is nevertheless a fact that in 1804 a member of the Lodge Royal Arch, Maybole, having gone to reside in the County of Meath, Ireland, was licensed "to enter such as he might consider worthy," and acknowledgment of his intrants only cease with his withholding from the Lodge the fees he had received.§§

The issuing by private Lodges of commissions—or, as they were afterwards termed, "dispensations"—was also an evil of great magnitude, and led to frequent complaints with regard to the practice of brethren traversing the country and picking up what members they could for their own lodges, to the detriment of those "locally situated." A remonstrance against the invasion of Montrose by the Master of St. Luke's Lodge, Edinburgh, was made in Grand Lodge by two Lodges of the former city in 1779, but the complaint was dismissed. In 1794, however, the Grand Lodge restrained the Lodges of Dunblane and Lesmahagow from making Masons in Glasgow, and condemned the practice as inconsistent with the conditions on which Lodges held their charters.|||| In the same year, however, the

* Masonic Magazine, vol. vii. (Jan., 1880), p. 204. † Lodge Minutes.

† Lyon, p. 179. §Ibid.

|| Lyon, the Notes on the Lodge of Kilwinning, except where derived from Lyon's History of the Lodge of Edinburgh, are taken from the same writer's history of "Mother Kilwinning," which appeared in the Freemason's Magazine N.S. vols. vii.—xiii. (1802-05).

¶ See p. 107, last note.

** Ibid. †† Lyon, p. 106.

‡‡ Ross, History of Freemasonry in Inverness, p. 55.

§§ Lyon, p. 104. |||| Ibid, p. 105.

Grand Lodge pronounced a different decision, in the case of the Journeymen Lodge—which body, being often called as Operative Masons to carry on their employment in different parts of the country, *claimed* and exercised the right, with some other old Operative Lodges to grant dispensations to open a Lodge at any place where a number of their brethren were stationed, particularly if the Master himself was present. Their right to do so was admitted by the Grand Lodge of Scotland.*

The Lodge of Kilwinning, before it rejoined, or rather amalgamated with the Grand Lodge of Scotland, in 1808, of course paid no attention to the edicts of the latter. The erection of Branch Lodges by “dispensation” became so popular in Ayrshire that in 1807 the villages of Monkton and Prestwick could boast, the former of two and the latter of one, such branch Lodges, each having its staff of officials apart from those of the Mother Lodge. A branch Lodge of this kind remained in active operation for eight years in the Ayrshire Militia, with results so beneficial to the Mother Lodge—Renfrew St. Paul—as to justify the holders of the “dispensation” being at that Lodge’s expense “treated to two bowls of toddy” on the occasion of their surrendering it.†

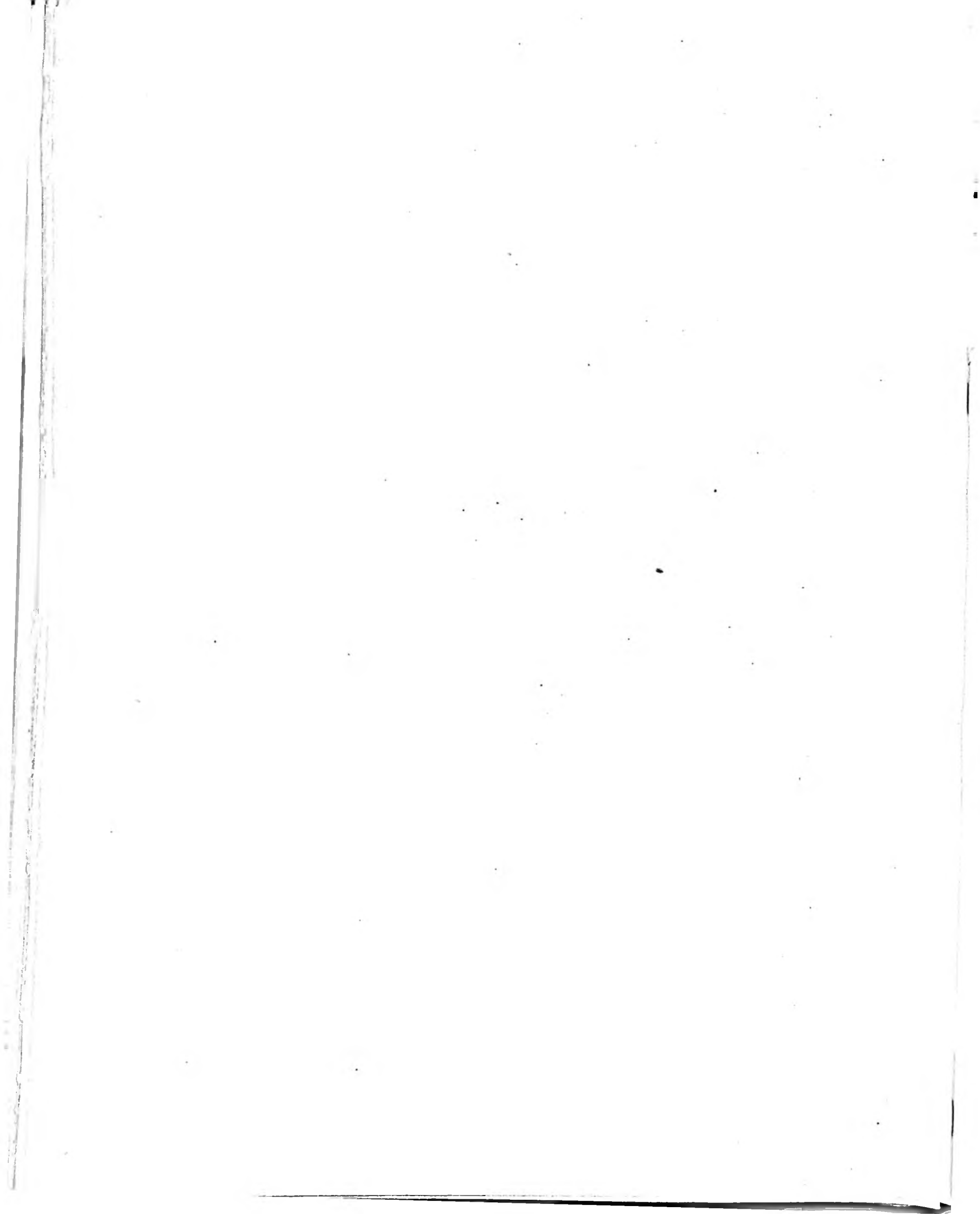
* Hunter, History of the Lodge of Journeymen Masons, No. 8, p. 73.

† See p. 110, fifth note.

V.
QUATUOR CORONATI LODGE
No. 2076.

Installation Meeting, Nov. 8th, 1887.
Address of the W. M. (Bro. R. F. Gould).

ENGLISH FREEMASONRY
Before the Era of Grand Lodges (1717).



QUATUOR CORONATI LODGE, No. 2076,

Installation Meeting, Nov. 8th, 1887.

Address of the W. M. (Bro. R. F. Gould).

BRETHREN,—In placing before the Lodge an address from the chair, I am animated by the desire of inaugurating what I hope may become an annual feature of our proceedings, as it seems to me the very best way in which can be periodically brought home to us, the benefit of now and then touching Mother Earth, or in other words of subjecting the position and prospects of the Lodge to an analysis, whereby we may estimate how far it fulfils, or falls short of fulfilling, all the purposes for which it was called into being.

The Secretary has supplied me with a statistical report, but from which, as it will shortly come before you in another form, I shall merely extract two items; one referring to our Correspondence Circle, and the other to our printed Transactions. The Correspondence Circle has reached a total of 155 members, residing actually and literally in all parts of the globe. This shows the amount of interest which is taken in our special labours; and I submit that the manner in which the Lodge of the Quatuor Coronati is now regarded by students of all nationalities as the centre of Masonic light, should not be without weight, when we proceed to consider whether the responsibility we have voluntarily assumed as a general school of instruction has been exercised with discrimination, and how far any variations on our established procedure would be attended by advantage.

The second item which I take from the statistical report, relates to our printed Transactions. The first number appeared in August last, and a second will be issued about the end of this month. The part already published contains five lectures (or papers) by members of the Lodge, and two have been delivered subsequently, making seven in all. Here I come to the argument which I wish to use in justification of this Address.

My ideal of such a Lodge as ours is, that it should represent an educational ladder in Masonry, reaching from the abyss of Masonic ignorance to the zenith to which we all aspire. That it should supply elementary teaching for those on the nethermost rung, and also be ready to discuss purely academical questions of the most abstruse character (if in the remotest manner calculated to enlarge our Masonic knowledge), for the mutual improvement of those on the highest.

The papers which have been read before the Lodge (the brethren will do me the justice of believing that I am not here passing judgment on my own) have been of an exceptionally high standard, and as special studies or academical discussions, their value can hardly be over-rated, but it has occurred to me, that for the purposes of a body teaching, or endeavouring to teach the elementary principles of Masonic Science and History, in which capacity—as it seems to me—this Lodge should also aspire to make its influence felt, they somehow fail to quite hit the mark, or to use a figure of speech, the lecturers have shot over, or beyond it.

This, I think, demands our attention, because there appears some danger lest the special work of the Lodge, as a purely Masonic body, might become completely overshadowed by the more engrossing studies of the specialists among us, especially when embodied in papers combining so much real learning and research, and displaying such exquisite literary workmanship as we have had read in this Lodge.

The suggestion, therefore, I have now to make is, that without superseding the style of papers hitherto read before the Lodge, a course of action I should myself very greatly deplore, we might occasionally vary them, by reading others of an elementary and purely Masonic character, and that in this way the wishes and tastes of all members might be consulted, without detriment to the special functions of the Lodge. Let me postulate, in the first instance, that there is something more in Freemasonry than the mere acquisition of the ritual of our *present* ceremonies, and the accumulation of degrees—the vast majority of which are only Masonic in the sense that none but Freemasons are admitted to them.

Our London Lodges are, to a great extent, select and expensive dining-clubs; and in the Provinces—with but here and there a solitary exception to the almost general rule—though the feasting is on a more reduced scale, the entire instruction communicated to inquiring brethren consists of a smattering of ritual and ceremonial. } X

Of English Masonry, it has been said, and not without great show of reason, that it now only retains the shell, of which our German brethren possess the kernel.

Lodges of Instruction (so-called) exist, it is true, but these oracles are dumb when a question is asked which soars beyond the mere routine duty of the various officers of Lodges in and during the ceremonies of the Craft. Indeed, I might go farther, and say that when in rare cases a reply is vouchsafed, it savours of the teaching of the Bologna school of painters, whose representative—Annibal Caracci—once said to a scholar, "*What you do not understand you must darken.*"

One, and perhaps the most urgently needed requisite, to a true study of Freemasonry, is a series of papers or lectures of an elementary character, each one dealing on broad historical lines with a particular epoch, carefully avoiding technicalities, moot or disputed points, and above all steering clear of theories. Of theory, indeed, it has been well said, that it is worth but little unless it can explain its own phenomena, and it must effect this without contradicting itself; therefore the facts are but too often assimilated to the theory, rather than the theory to the facts. Most theorists may be compared to the grandfather of the Great Frederick (of Prussia), who was in the habit of amusing himself, during his fits of the gout, by painting likenesses of his grenadiers, and if the picture did not happen to resemble the grenadier, he settled the matter by painting the grenadier to the picture.

By eschewing theories, therefore, and adhering strictly to facts, I think we might arrange a system of elementary lectures, supplementary to those of a more advanced kind, which, while comprehensible by the youngest Entered Apprentice, would at the same time enlarge the foundations upon which the specialists among us might erect the scaffolding for their superior workmanship.

These lectures should, if possible, be delivered by different brethren on each distinct occasion, and when completed might serve as a text-book for beginners, and would, no doubt, be largely used, in the same way that we should in the first instance do ourselves, by the various Lodges throughout the world.

It may, indeed, be advanced that there are already in existence text-books from which the student who wishes to obtain a bird's eye view of the general subject of Freemasonry may do so quickly and easily. But if so, I am quite unable to indicate where they may be procured. Findel, no doubt, has written, or rather compiled, a concise history of the Society, but, like most Germans (to adopt the words of Samuel Taylor Coleridge), while he is not altogether wrong, like them, also, he is never altogether right. Of my own recent work, as indeed of all that I have inflicted upon my brethren, I am naturally inclined to speak with indulgence, for parental love is perhaps best exemplified in the affection which one feels for the most rickety offspring, but putting sentiment aside and taking my History of Freemasonry to be worthy of its title, I should be the very last person to contend that it is either compendious—which would be a manifest absurdity—or a complete guide to students, except to those who will patiently read it through from the first to the last chapter.

Sir Richard Burton, in one of his earliest works has remarked:—"Next to the Antiquary, in simplicity of mind, capacity of belief, and capability of assertion, ranks the Freemason." This picture is scarcely overdrawn, but I think that the jesting words of the great traveller would soon cease to apply to any lodge of Freemasons who might adopt the scheme here advocated, and who in the regulation of their proceedings should determine to propose with diffidence, to conjecture with freedom, to examine with candour, and to dissent with civility:—" *in rebus necessariis sit unitas; in non necessariis liberalitas; in omnibus, charitas.*"

The divisions or sections into which the series of lectures should be arranged, would fall more properly within the province of the Lodge as a body to determine, though I will at once state that Early Scottish Masonry should indubitably form the subject of the second lecture; and the opening History of the Grand Lodge of England the third. Other papers on English, Scottish, and Irish Masonry, might bring the number of lectures to about eight, and constitute a first series of the undertaking, after which, however, there would still remain a large number of subjects, albeit only indirectly connected with this country, which might supply the materials for a second, third, and fourth series of the same class of work.

I shall now proceed with a short paper, in which I shall reduce theory to practice, and enable you to test the soundness of my conclusions by an experimental Essay (or Lecture) dealing with what is actually known of Freemasonry in England before the era of Grand Lodges, of which the first or Mother of Grand Lodges was the Grand Lodge of England, established in London in 1717.

ENGLISH FREEMASONRY

Before the Era of Grand Lodges (1717).

It was asserted by the founder of the Illuminati, Dr. Adam Weishaupt, that "No man can give any account of the Order of Freemasonry, of its origin, of its history, of its object, nor any explanation of its mysteries and symbols, which does not leave the mind in total uncertainty on all these points." This was expressed about a century ago, and is almost as true now as then, the only point on which more light has been shed in the interval, being the history of the Institution. This indeed we cannot trace back any great distance, but we reach the 14th century, when the actual proofs are exhausted, and there is nothing to help us but tradition and conjecture. But we are fully justified in believing that much evidence must have existed which has now perished, not to speak of what may even yet be brought to light, albeit at present entombed in the vast mass of ancient writings distributed throughout those public and private collections in Great Britain, that await, alas! the examination and classification of diligent and competent investigators.

The subject of this Paper I shall treat under three heads or divisions. The first, Oral Traditions, taking us back to the time of St. Alban, the first Christian Martyr in Britain, and coming down to about the close of the 14th century. The second, the Legend of the Craft, or the evidence of the Old Charges or Manuscript Constitutions, beginning at about the year 1390, and carrying us down to (and beyond) 1646; and the third, Symbolical Masonry from 1646, the date of Elias Ashmole, the Herald and Antiquary being made a Freemason at Warrington, down to the formation of the first or original Grand Lodge in 1717. These periods are not selected arbitrarily, but because there is no evidence from which we can actually *prove* (though we may reasonably infer) the existence of either a speculative science or a legendary history before 1390 (*ca*), so that traditions must be taken for what they are worth, and even if this amounts to very little, the fact should nevertheless not be lost sight of, that they were given to the world on the authority of very eminent men, and have influenced all Masonic writers down to our days.

The 2nd period—1390-1646—covers exactly 250 years, and throughout the whole of it there is no evidence of living Freemasonry in South Britain. By this I mean there are no Lodge Minutes or records, nor have we evidence from any source whatever which will reduce to actual demonstration that there were Free and Accepted Masons who met in Lodges in South Britain before 1646. That they did, we cannot doubt, for the testimony of the Old Charges or Manuscript Constitutions, though silent, is sufficiently conclusive on this point, and there is the collateral evidence of Scottish Masonic records, which are of superior antiquity to our own.

The 3rd division of the subject I name "Symbolical Masonry," because we know that Elias Ashmole did not follow the Masons' trade, and therefore that in being "made a Freemason" in 1646, he became, as every brother present this evening has since become, a member of a society using the terms of the Masonic art to typify something external to its operative practice. It is, of course, deducible, that the other speculative Masons in the Lodge, when Ashmole was received, must have been admitted before him, but the entry in his diary under the date of October 16th, 1646, affords the earliest positive evidence of the reception of a non-operative—or indeed of a candidate of any description whatever—in an English Lodge.

To begin then with Part I. Oral Traditions.

These were given to the world on the authority of three very eminent men, viz. :—Sir Christopher Wren, Sir William Dugdale, and Elias Ashmole, and are as follows :—

Wren's opinion, which I shall first cite, is given in the Parentalia or Memoirs of the Family of the Wrens, compiled by his son, and published by his grandson in 1750. "The Italians (among whom were yet some Greek refugees), and with them French, German, and Flemings, joined into a Fraternity of Architects, procuring Papal Bulls for their Encouragement and particular Privileges, they stiled themselves Freemasons, and ranged from one Nation to another, as they found Churches to be built, (for very many in those Ages were everywhere in Building through Piety or Emulation). Their Government was regular, and where they fixed near the Building in Hand, they made a Camp of Huts. A Surveyor govern'd in chief; every tenth Man was called a Warden, and overlooked each nine."

Dugdale's statement is thus related by John Aubrey in his Natural History of Wiltshire, and dates from some period before 1686.

"S^r William Dugdale told me many years since, that about Henry the third's time the Pope gave a Bull or diploma to a Company of Italian Architects to travell up and downe over all Europe to build Churches. From these are derived the *Fraternity of Free-Masons*. They are known to one another by certayn Signes & Watch words : it continues to this day. They have Severall Lodges in severall Counties for their reception : and when any of them fall into decay, the brotherhood is to relieve him, &c. The manner of their adoption is very formall, and with an Oath of Secrecy."

Lastly, there is the opinion of Elias Ashmole, which was contributed to the *Biographia Britannica* by Dr. Knipe. "What from Mr. E. Ashmole's collection I could gather, was, that the report of our Society's taking rise from a Bull granted by the Pope, in the reign of Henry III., to some Italian Architects, to travel over all Europe to erect chapels, was ill-founded. Such a Bull there was, and those Architects were Masons ; but this Bull, in the opinion of the learned Mr. Ashmole, was confirmative only, and did not by any means create our fraternity, or even establish them in this Kingdom." Masonry—according to the same authority—was established in England by St. Alban, and "it flourished more or less down to the days of King Athelstane, who granted the Masons a Charter." On the authority, therefore, of the opinions ascribed to these eminent men (Wren, Dugdale, and Ashmole), there grew up a theory that all Gothic Churches were erected by a body of travelling Freemasons acting in concert, and being apparently a kind of lay brethren, † guided entirely by the "monks," and always working as one man, were assumedly under the control of one supreme chief, as the Franciscans and Jesuits of later times by a "general." †

Also coupled with this was ordinarily found a belief that the Gothic architecture practised by these monks and Masons, was, in its origin, an emanation from Byzantium, thus forming a link by which to connect the Masonic bodies and their architecture with the East, and so on up to the Temple, and further still, if necessary, *ad infinitum*.

Around these traditions there gathered others, the most noteworthy being that long prior to the year 1717 there were both Grand Lodges and Grand Masters, and among the † latter no less a person than Sir Christopher Wren himself. Though it will be evident—as tradition is wholly insufficient to bolster up an absolute impossibility—that he could not well have held an office in the 17th century which did not then exist. The older traditions, I fear, must also be allowed to pass into oblivion, but I have thought it right to cite them, because their influence, though on the wane, is hardly yet extinct, as they will be found embalmed in some works on architecture, and even in our most recent encyclopædias.

Part II.—The Legend of the Craft as contained in the Old Charges or Manuscript Constitutions.

Before, however, proceeding to describe these documents somewhat in detail, a few preliminary observations are essential.

† In 1330, we hear of a Lodge in connection with St. Stephen's Chapel, Westminster, and in 1335 of one at York, but from the "Orders" supplied to the Masons at work in the latter, there is nothing from which we can infer the existence of a speculative science. It is true, indeed, that each of our great Cathedrals had a gang of workmen attached to it in regular pay, and Sir Gilbert Scott—no mean authority—has noticed the significance of this fact, though, as he well puts it, "the fables of the Freemasons have produced a natural reaction, and the degree of truth that there is in these traditions has consequently been overlooked." But I must pass on to surer ground. The first use of the term "Freemasons" occurs in the City records under the years 1376-7, and the second (*fre Maceons*) † which refer to the building trade in 1396. Neither of these, however, tends to lengthen our Masonic pedigree ; and here I may conveniently mention that the term "Freemason" does not occur in the very oldest documents of the Craft. Also, that as far as an opinion can be formed, it was preceded by the expression 'trew Mason,' which in later versions of the Old Charges was exchanged for 'Freemason.' About the year last named (1396), or between 1390 and 1400, our actual genealogical inquiry has its beginning. This we meet with in what is called the Halliwell Poem, an ancient manuscript still extant, dating from about the last decade of the 14th century, which relates a legendary history, and possesses other features, clearly showing that a copy of the Old Charges or Manuscript Constitutions had been seen and utilised by the versifier or compiler. Similar evidences attesting the existence of such documents in the 15th century is afforded by another ancient writing known as the Cooke MS. After which, and without a break, we are brought down to the 16th century, when we meet with the earliest existing copies of the class of documents I

am about to describe more fully, and which there is little or no doubt were extensively used in the 14th century, though our actual knowledge with regard to them is restricted to a single channel of information.

The Old Charges, or Manuscript Constitutions, are known by a variety of names, *e.g.*, the Masonic Constitutions, the Constitutions of the Craft, the History of Freemasonry, and the Legend of the Guild, etc., etc. Ordinarily they are in roll or scroll form, and consist of three parts: Firstly, The Introductory Prayer, Declaration or Invocation; Secondly, The History of the Order, or the Legend of the Guild, which, beginning before the Flood, alludes to Euclid, Solomon, (and many other Biblical characters), and Charles Martel, and generally ends with the era of King Athelstane, or about 926; and, thirdly, the peculiar statutes and duties, the regulations and observances, which the Craft in general—or Masons in particular—are bound carefully to uphold and inviolably to maintain.

By no other Craft in Great Britain has documentary evidence been furnished of its having claimed at any time a legendary or traditional history.

This Craft Legend sustained no material variation from about 1650 down to 1717, during the century and more which preceded the era of Grand Lodges.

These documents were used at the reception of candidates for admission. The Craft Legend was read to them, and they then swore on the holy writings to faithfully observe the statutes and regulations of the Society.

In the first volume of my "History of Freemasonry," published five years ago, a great number of these ancient documents are fully described, and many others are briefly referred to. Since then seven additional MSS. have been discovered, bringing the grand total to close upon sixty.

The Old Charges or Manuscript Constitutions are supposed to have been introduced into Scotland from England, and at least four copies exist which were in use in Scottish Lodges of the 17th century.

The third part of my general subject begins with the initiation of Elias Ashmole at Warrington, in 1646. His diary simply records that he was made a Freemason, and the only other noticeable feature of the occurrence consists in the fact, which we have to thank our Bro. W. H. Rylands for elucidating, that the Lodge was composed almost, if not entirely, of speculative or non-operative members.

This was also the case when Ashmole, apparently after an interval of 35 years, was present at a Lodge held at Mason's Hall, London, in 1682.

The next evidence is that of Dr. Plot, who published the Natural History of Staffordshire in 1686, and in that work we are informed that Freemasonry was "spread more or less over all the Nation," and that the members comprised "persons of the most eminent quality." The admission, according to Plot, chiefly consisted in the communication of "secret signes," which, he averred, were of so potent an efficacy, that "a Fellow of the Society when signalled by one of them, would be obliged to forthwith come down even from the top of a Steeple" in answer to it. This whimsical conceit became in the next century the subject of the following parody:

"If on House ne'r so high,
A Brother they spy,
As his Trowel He dextrously lays on;
He must leave off his Work,
And come down with a Jerk,
At the Sign of an Accepted Mason."

Dr. Plot then cites an Act of Parliament—3 Hen. vi., c. i., A.D. 1425—which, he says, "quite abolished the Society, though the Act was too little observed." The Act of Parliament referred to was really one of the Statutes of Labourers, and only affected the working Masons; but as "most authors are like sheep, never deviating from the beaten track," it will surprise no one that the error into which Plot fell was repeated by later writers. Indeed, to give a single example, Governor Pownall, a celebrated antiquary, in his "Observations on the Origin and Progress of Gothic Architecture, and on the Corporation of Freemasons; supposed to be establishers of it as a regular Order," a paper read before the Society of Antiquaries in 1788 thus alludes to the Act of Parliament (1425) and the Freemasons:—"This statute put an end to this body, and all its illegal chapters and pretences. It should seem, however, that societies of these masons met in mere clubs, wherein continuing to observe and practice some of their ceremonies which once had a reference to their constitutions and to the foundation of powers which no longer existed, and were scarcely understood, they only made sport to

mock themselves, and by degrees their clubs or Lodges sunk into a mere foolish, harmless mummerly."

Dr. Plot was guilty of other mistakes, so that I do not think we should place too great reliance on his statement that the number of Freemasons was very numerous in his time, as it is quite inconsistent with the testimony from every other source, except one, to the reception of which, moreover, some objections may be raised: though as other members of the Lodge are satisfied as to its admissibility in evidence, I shall now cite it. This is a copy of the Old Charges or Manuscript Constitutions, in the possession of the Lodge of Antiquity, No. 2, which at the end has the following attestation clause:—

"Written by Robert Padgett, Clarke to the WORSHIPFULL Society of the FREE MASONS of the CITY of LONDON in the second yeare of the Raigne of our most GRACIOUS SOVERAIGN LORD King James the SECOND of ENGLAND, &c. Annoq Domini 1686."

My objection to this evidence is, that there is no proof whatever of such a man or such a Society being in existence in 1686, although, of course, I freely admit that such proof, may yet be forthcoming.

In 1688 Randle Holme, the Chester Herald, in his "Academic of Armory," styles himself a "member of that Society called Free-Masons."

Chester Freemasonry in the last half of the seventeenth century has been made the subject of minute research by Bro. W. H. Rylands, who has demonstrated that of 18 brethren belonging to the Lodge, of which the Herald was a member, four were Aldermen, and four Masons. There were two gentlemen (including Randle Holme), a merchant, clothworker, glazier, tailor, carpenter, tanner, bricklayer, and labourer. It remains to be stated that a copy exists of the Old Charges or Manuscript Constitutions, which was transcribed by Randle Holme, probably about 1665. This will be found in the Harleian Collection (British Museum), and in the same volume of manuscripts (Harl. MS., 2054) and immediately succeeding it is the following form of oath, in the same handwriting:—

"There is seu'all words & signes of a free Mason to be revealed to y^e w^{ch} as y^e will answ: before God at the Great & terrible day of Judgm' y^e keep secret & not to reveale the same to any in the heares of any pson w^{ch} but to the M^r & fellows of the said Society of free Masons, so helpe me God, &c."

I now pass to the year 1691, in which year John Aubrey wrote the following note in a manuscript work—the Natural History of Wiltshire—but which was not printed until 1844:—

"1691

Mdm, This day [May the 18th being
after Rogation Sunday
Monday] is a great convention at St.
Paul's Church of the Fraternity of the
Accepted Masons: where Sir Christopher Wren
is to be adopted a Brother: and S^r Henry
Goodric . . . of y^e Tower and divers
others—there have been Kings, that have
been of this Sodalitie."

Whether or not Aubrey's prediction was verified by the admission or adoption of Wren is a puzzle that still awaits solution.

According to Dr. Anderson more than six Lodges met in London about the year 1693, and at the same date there is evidence of Lodge activity at York.

In the eighteenth century there was a Lodge at Alnwick, 1701, and at Scarborough, 1705.

The Society seems to have been at least a well-known one in 1709, as we may infer from an Essay by Mr. (afterwards Sir Richard) Steele, which appeared—June 9th—in the *Tatler*, from which I give an extract:—

June 9th, 1709.—"But my Reason for troubling you at this present is, to put a stop, if it may be, to an insinuating set of people, who sticking to the LETTER of your Treatise, and not to the spirit of it, do assume the Name of PRETTY Fellows; nay, and even get new names, as you very well hint. . . . *They have their signs and tokens like Free-Masons.*"

The same writer, also in the *Tatler*—May 2, 1760—mentions a class of persons of whom he states: "One would think that they had some secret Intimation of each other like the Freemasons."

There was a Lodge, as already related, at York in 1693, and this no doubt continued in activity until 1712, when the earliest existing York Minutes have their commencement.

From these we learn that according to the custom there, candidates for reception were "sworn and admitted into the honourable society and fraternity of Free-Masons." There are entries under the years 1712, 1713, 1714, and 1716, and the last one runs:—

"At St. John's Lodge in Christmas, 1716. At the house of M^r James Boreham, situate [in] Stonegate, in York, being a General Lodge, held there by the hono^{ble} Society and Company of Free Masons, in the City of York, John Turner, Esq., was sworne and admitted into the said Hono^{ble} Society and Fraternity of Free Masons.

Charles Fairfax, Esq., *Dep. President.*
John Turner."

The Grand Lodge of England, the first body of the kind, was formed and constituted by four London Lodges on June 24th—St. John Baptist's day—1717.

Here I come to the end of my tether, and am fully conscious of the very imperfect sketch I have placed before you. To really grasp what the Masonry was that preceded the era of Grand Lodges there is needed a companion picture, *viz.*, a sketch of Scottish Masonry from 1598, when its actual records commence, down to 1736, when the Grand Lodge of Scotland was erected. Two systems of Masonry were for several centuries pursuing their course, side by side, in North and South Britain respectively, and we cannot fully comprehend either one of them without the light that is reflected from the other. The next paper therefore of this class,—if we are to have any more of them,—ought, without doubt, to be devoted to the early Masonry of Scotland.

Lastly, and by way of summing up some of the conclusions, which seems to me to arise out of the special inquiry we have been pursuing this evening, let me add:—

It is, I think, abundantly clear that the Masonic body had its first origin in the trades-unions of mediæval operatives.

Whether these unions inherited, or assimilated traditions or ceremonial observances from previously existing sodalities or societies, is open to conjecture, but at present incapable of proof. Theories of origin or possible derivation might well serve as the title of some future paper, but their consideration this evening would be foreign to my purpose. After the great cataclysm of the Reformation, no more churches were built, and hence the builders died out; while the unions having lost their *raison d'être* naturally dissolved, except some few scattered through the country and these vegetated in obscurity for a period of close upon two centuries, until we find them re-organised and taking a new *point de départ* about the year 1717. But by this time the Masonic bodies appear under a new guise. While still retaining, as was natural, many forms, ceremonies, and words which they derived from their direct ancestors, the working Masons, yet we find the operative Masonry was, and probably long had been, in a state of decay, and a new form, that of speculative or symbolical Masonry had been substituted in its place.

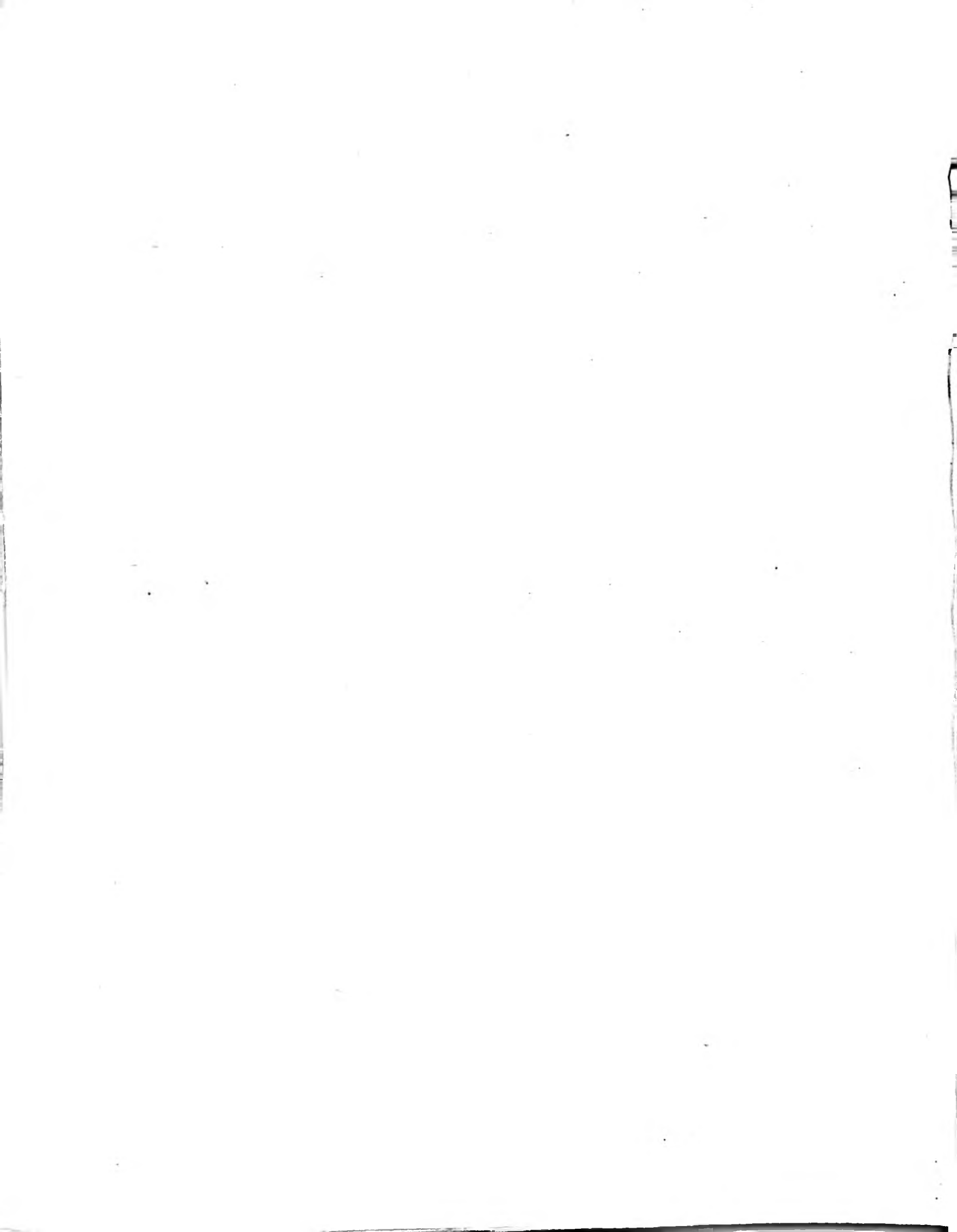
The precise manner in which the older system was at first over-shadowed and finally supplanted by the new, it is impossible to explain; nor do we know whether, so to speak, Masonry always had its speculative side, even in the 14th century or earlier. There is probability, though no certainty, that it had, but on this point the ancient documents to which I have previously referred are our sole guides, and I cannot undertake to say that some expressions which may be found in them will convey the same conclusion to other minds as to my own.

All that can be predicated with confidence is, that an alteration in the method of communicating the Masonic secrets took place after 1717, but the question of degrees, or in other words, a comparison between the Masonry practised *before* and *after* the era of Grand Lodges, will only be ripe for practical discussion when we have advanced a little further upon the path, which I shall much congratulate myself if I prevail upon you to pursue

VI.

ON THE ANTIQUITY OF MASONIC,
SYMBOLISM.

[Ars Quatuor Coronatorum, 1890.]



ON THE ANTIQUITY OF MASONIC SYMBOLISM

[A. Q. C., 1890.]

The Secretary having called upon me to read the paper which has long stood in my name—"On the degrees of Pure and Ancient Freemasonry"—I find that in order to make myself generally understood, it will be desirable that I should lay before you, in the first instance, what I may venture to term a preliminary thesis, which will therefore be proceeded with. But in the lecture of this evening my object is two-fold. I wish to lay a sure foundation for a future inquiry into the early Ritual and Ceremonial which prevailed under the Grand Lodge of England; and there is a stronger motive still for the method of treatment I have thought it advisable to adopt.

The inaugural addresses of the two brethren who have successively followed me in the chair of this Lodge, seem to me to reflect pretty accurately the opinions of a portion of our members from whom much is expected in the near future. These are, that the domain of *Ancient*, as distinguished from that of *Modern* Masonry, has been very strangely neglected, and that if we really wish to enlist the sympathy and interest of scholars and men of intelligence, in the special labours of the Lodge, we must make at least a resolute attempt to partially lift the veil, by which the earlier history of our Art or Science is obscured.

It is almost unnecessary to mention, to the brethren I am now addressing, that the adjectives "Ancient" and "Modern" as here applied to Masonry, are used in their ordinary acceptation—that is, by members of our own Lodge; or, to be precise, that by the expression "Ancient Masonry" is to be understood the history of the Craft *before*, and by that of "Modern Masonry" the history of the Craft *after*, the era of Grand Lodges. The line of demarcation between them being therefore drawn at the year 1717.

Above that line, and reaching back to the fourteenth century, are to be found our written traditions, and whether our Symbolical traditions are entitled to take rank by their side, I shall discuss generally, and whether any place above the line can be assigned to them at all, I shall discuss specially in the body of my paper. By this I mean, that while putting before you some speculations with regard to the remote past of our Society which are not inconsistent with the shreds of evidence that have come down to us, these are subsidiary to my main design, which is, to satisfy your minds, that beyond all reasonable doubt the essentials of the Three Craft Degrees must have existed before the formation of the first Grand Lodge—that of England—in 1717. More than this, I shall not seek to establish, though I hope at the close of my lecture, the inclination of your judgment may be in the direction of my own, which is that the balance of probability is in favour of as early an origin being attributed to our symbolical as to our written traditions.

But if there should prove to be, at the close of the discussion which will follow this paper, anything at all approaching a consensus of opinion that the ceremonial of Masonry pre-dates the era of Grand Lodges, a highly important object will have been attained.

Scholars and antiquaries take but a languid interest—there is no use in disguising it—in the history of Modern Masonry. They do not believe that the system of Masonry, as understood by the founders of the first Grand Lodge, is capable of indefinite expansion. Degrees, in their judgment, cannot be multiplied *ad infinitum*. But the history and origin of Ancient Masonry are regarded by them in quite a different manner. These, they are not only willing but eager to study and investigate, yet an unwelcome doubt obtrudes itself which checks, if it does not wholly dissipate, the ardour of their research.

Conjointly with the old MS. Constitutions, which are of undoubted antiquity, the symbolical teaching in our Lodges—though possessing a remoteness of origin less assured—has a peculiar fascination for all genuine votaries of archæology.

Here, however, the doubt referred to, creeps in, and the scholar or antiquary who has a longing to trace the antiquity of our symbolism, is checked by similar reflections to those which occurred to Gibbon, who kept back an hypothesis he had framed with regard to the real secret of the Ancient Mysteries, "from an apprehension of discovering what never existed;" and to the elder Disraeli, who much in the same way, excused his imperfect speculations with regard to the shadowy and half-mythical Rosicrucians. But if the Symbolism of Masonry, or a material part of it, can be proved with reasonable certainty to

ante-date the year 1717, the doubt, upon which I have enlarged, will disappear, and with it, we may venture to hope, the present disinclination on the part of really competent investigators, to extend their researches into the only field of inquiry—the domain of Ancient Masonry—which offers any prospect whatever of rewarding the patient student of our antiquities, by a partial revelation of the origin, and by the recovery of some portion at least of the lost learning of the fraternity.

Before, however, proceeding with my main argument, let me introduce a few historical *data*, which if kindly kept in mind will give a better grasp of the very complicated subject I have to deal with in this paper.

It is well known, that the first Grand Lodge, that of England, was founded by four London Lodges in 1717; also, that by students of the Craft, it is customary to speak of the Masonry which existed before that date as Ancient, and of the Masonry which followed afterwards as Modern.

The Grand Lodge of England pursued the even tenor of its way, without much variety occurring, until the year 1721, which is the next date I shall ask you to carry in your recollection. In this year two important things happened. First of all, a great nobleman, the Duke of Montagu, was elected Grand Master, and the Society rose at a single bound into notice and esteem. Secondly, Mr. James Anderson, a graduate of Marischal College, Aberdeen, and who was then a Presbyterian Minister in London, was selected by the Grand Master and the Grand Lodge as the most competent person to adjust, as it were, the Masonry of Ancient times upon a Modern basis.

The following is an extract from the Minutes of Grand Lodge, 29th September, 1721:—"His Grace's *Worship* and the *Lodge* finding fault with all the copies of the *Old Gothic Constitutions*, order'd Brother *James Anderson*, A.M., to digest the same in a new and better method." The Constitutions referred to were certain old documents, usually in roll or scroll form, containing the Legend of the Craft and a Code of Ancient Regulations, both of which it was the custom in old days to read over to the operative Masons on their first admission into the Lodge.

By the aid of these MS. Constitutions, Anderson compiled the first "Book of Constitutions," which was published in 1723. This work contained a quantity of "Regulations," No. XIII. of which runs as follows:—"Apprentices must be admitted Masters and Fellow Craft only here [*i.e.*, in the Grand Lodge] unless by a dispensation."

This usage, however, was again varied by the Grand Lodge, on November 25th, 1725, when it was ordained, "That the Master of Each Lodge, with the consent of his Wardens and the Majority of the Brethren, being Masters, may make Masters at their discretion."*

From the foregoing it will appear that only *two* degrees (or distinct ceremonies) were recognised by the Grand Lodge of England in 1723, Apprentice, and Fellow Craft *or* Master, the two latter being convertible terms; also, that in 1725, the restriction was removed and that "Masters" could be made by private Lodges at discretion.

The period embraced by some of the figures I have given you, *viz.*, from 1717 to 1723, † has been styled the Epoch of Transition, because in the opinion of many leading authorities, the system of Masonry we now possess (or in other words, the three degrees of pure and Ancient Masonry, as we are accustomed to call them), was then manufactured or concocted.

Against this view, however, we find arrayed the conviction of another set of authorities, who are firm believers in Masonic degrees, and discredit the notion that any alterations were made by the Grand Lodge of England, in the secrets of Masonry—except in what may be termed non-essentials, or, to speak with more precision, in the method adopted of imparting them.

Thus, there are two theories or schools of thought with regard to the degrees, or to use an expression I prefer, *the Symbolism of Masonry*, a wider term, and one which will cover everything done or practised in the lodges at a later period than the so-called Epoch of Transition (1717-23), and for which (it is alleged on one side) no equivalent is to be found in the doings and practices of the Lodges in existence prior to 1717.

Each of these views or theories has its supporters, and to whichever side the argument may for the moment seem to preponderate, we cannot be too careful to recollect—that there is evidence to the contrary.

* Grand Lodge Minutes.

† Although the Grand Lodge Records are silent as to the exact date on which three degrees (or distinct ceremonies) were recognised by the Governing Body, it can be proved *aliunde*, that they were wrought in London in 1724, and probably earlier.

The number of authorities, indeed, by which either of these two beliefs is upheld, is so evenly balanced, that there is no middle course between reading the testimony on one side, and despising the other so thoroughly, as to refrain from ever looking at it, or to do as I shall propose to you in the present instance, that is, to give each side a patient hearing.

To-night, indeed, I can only put before you one branch of the case, namely, the arguments which I think may be adduced in favour of the antiquity of degrees, or to use the wider expression already adopted, of Masonic Symbolism. But they will go far, I trust, towards covering the whole ground, and, if not, in the general reply to which I shall be entitled at the close of the discussion, I will do my best to grapple fairly with any counter-arguments which may be advanced in support of the other side of the question.

By this method of treatment, I shall be able to present you—not so much with my personal conclusions, as that with what will serve as an ultimate basis for your own. There is an old saying, *Quot homines, tot sententiæ*, “as many men, so many opinions”—and if for “men” you read “lecturers,” it stands to reason that while every person who reads a paper before you might give a different opinion if you invited an expression of his individual judgments or crotchets upon a question in dispute—on the other hand you would be always sure to evoke some useful information calculated to assist you in arriving at an independent conclusion, if you were to ask what could be said both on the one side and on the other.

Of the important part played by the Rev. James Anderson in the moulding of Ancient Masonry, 1721-23, upon what are averred to have been “new lines,” I shall have more to say, when I get to the body of the lecture, but I ask you to carefully note the fact that when, in 1721, it was designed to consolidate the “Constitutions of Ancient and Modern Masonry,” the task of doing so was confided to a Scotsman, and who, as there is good ground for believing, had been received into the Society while a resident in Aberdeen.

It may now be convenient to formulate in words, the precise question which will constitute my main contention this evening. It is this:—

Is the Symbolism of Masonry an inheritance derived from the old Masons who flourished before the era of the Grand Lodges; or has it been borrowed from the Rosicrucians or others, after 1717?

There is also a secondary contention (or series of speculations) to which I have already referred, *viz.*, that the Symbolism of Masonry is very old indeed—much older than the seventeenth century, but I freely admit having been led to this supposition by a chain of conjectural evidence, which facts alone can substantiate.

For convenience sake, however, and in order to illustrate more clearly the line of argument I shall pursue, let me also formulate in words the bye or side issue, which I am desirous of raising for your consideration:—

Is there ground for supposing that the Symbolism of our present Freemasonry existed in mediæval times, and that it has decayed *pari passu*, with the operative Masonry of that period, and come down to us, divested of much of its real significancy, as a legacy or inheritance from the working Masons of those early times? X

In the next place, and before I proceed to state my case, let me, in order that you may better understand it, when duly laid before you—make use of a comparison.

Unlike that of other nations, the civilisation of Egypt presents a continuous deterioration from the earliest ages to the latest. The further we go back the more consummate is the art, the more complete the command of mechanical processes and appliances. In other words the civilisation of Egypt must have culminated before the very earliest dawn of its recorded history. If Egypt is not altogether exceptional and abnormal, the use of the mechanical methods employed by the Pyramid builders points to an antecedent civilization of which the extent in time becomes literally incalculable, while it seems to become more and more inexplicable the more its real character is investigated and brought to light. X

In the same way, I conceive that there is ground for reasonable conjecture, whether the Symbolism of Masonry, to a considerable portion of which, even at this day, no meaning can be assigned which is entirely satisfactory to an intelligent mind—must not “have culminated before the very earliest dawn of its recorded history.” Also, that it underwent a gradual process of decay, which was arrested but only at the point we now have it, by passing into the control of the Grand Lodge of England in 1717. X

Against this view, it may of course be contended, and—as many will think—with, perhaps, equal plausibility, that instead of a decline, there was an advance, a progressive development of Masonic Symbolism, and that with the solitary exception of a rude form of initiation or reception, we have inherited nothing external to the operative practice of our ancestors, the working Masons.

But, as the old proverb says, "If you run after two hares you will catch neither." In maintaining the affirmative of the proposition, that the Symbolism of Masonry, has come down to us with a very respectable flavour of antiquity, I cannot undertake at one and the same time, both the attack and defence.

At this stage, and before proceeding any further with my remarks, it may be convenient if I re-state the two propositions of which I shall maintain the affirmative.

To take the wider and more comprehensive one in the first instance :—"It is, that the Symbolism of Masonry, or at all events a material part of it, is of very great antiquity—and that in substance, the system of Masonry we now possess—including the three degrees of the Craft—has come down to us, in all its essentials from times not only remote to our own, but also to those of the founders of the earliest of Grand Lodges.

The foregoing embraces the *general* contention which will pervade this address, and I shall therefore hope to be excused for once more bringing under your notice, though I ask your more particular attention to the narrower proposition of the two, *viz.*, that the Symbolism of Masonry is older than the year 1717.

This is my *special* contention which I shall endeavour to press home, and should our united labours result in the determination of what has hitherto been a moot point with Masonic scholars, a very distinct advance will have been made, in the path of inquiry, which it is the object and mission of the Lodge to follow up.

In dealing with the complicated problem, which I have undertaken to treat in this lecture, I feel that I shall have need of your indulgence, while I attempt to place before you in a clear and connected form, the scattered shreds of evidence wherein we may see, as in a glass dimly, a pale reflection of some of the historic past of Freemasonry. But on the other hand, I am no less convinced that the lecturer who is unable to make the abstruse moderately simple, is not gifted with a very clear intellect, or is lacking in that modicum of literary ability which the members of a Lodge like our own, have at least the right to expect in any one of their number, who takes upon himself the function of attempting either to instruct or entertain them. Hence if I fail to put my points before you, with all the clearness that might be desirable, the fault will be my own, nor shall I register an apology in advance—for as the Duke well says to the Weaver, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, "Never excuse, if your play be a bad one, keep at least the excuses to yourself."

Chart.

[TO ILLUSTRATE THE LECTURE.]

12TH CENTURY.

Masons' Tool-Marks in Europe betray a *Western* Origin: Transition from the Norman to the Gothic or Pointed Style of Architecture, and possible introduction of Symbolic or speculative teaching among the stone-masons of Britain practising that style.

13TH CENTURY.

ENGLAND.

SCOTLAND.

Progressive development of the Gothic or Pointed Style, and of its accompanying symbolism. The Masons' tool-marks betray an *Eastern* Origin.

The old style of tooling continued.

14TH CENTURY.

Continued Progressive development.

War of Independence; building stayed: decay of Mediæval Operative Masonry when only partially developed.

15TH CENTURY.

Wars of the Roses; dormancy of the Craft in both its Operative and Speculative features; partial reproduction of the Gothic style.

Lodges exist for trade purposes only, though fragments of an incomplete symbolic (or speculative) system are handed down in an imperfect manner: Ceremonial very simple.

16TH CENTURY.

The Reformation: no more churches built; the builders die out.

As above.

17TH CENTURY.

Lodges survive, mainly for Speculative purposes; Elias Ashmole initiated, A.D. 1646; "Manner of adoption very formal;" and probably adumbrated by that of the

As above.

. Lodge of Aberdeen, A.D. 1670.

18TH CENTURY.

"Signs and Tokens" of the Freemasons alluded to in print, 1709; Formation of the Grand Lodge of England, 1717; Dr. Anderson ordered to "digest" the old MS. Constitutions, 1721; printed book of Constitutions, 1723.

Lodge procedure characterized by great simplicity until after 1717; English system of three degrees gradually introduced; Grand Lodge of Scotland erected, 1736.

The task immediately before me is to make a beginning in historical Masonry. Let us therefore, in the first instance, put entirely on one side the speculations of Modern writers, and ascertain what independent authorities there were, before the era of Grand Lodges, by whom any period of origin has been assigned to our British Freemasonry.

Three such authorities may be cited: Sir William Dugdale, Sir Christopher Wren, and Elias Ashmole, whose several opinions have already been recorded in our *Transactions*.* One of these, however, the statement ascribed to Dugdale, probably the greatest antiquary of his age, must again be referred to. John Aubrey, in his *Natural History of Wiltshire*, written (though not published) in 1686, observes:—

"S^r William Dugdale told me many years since, that about Henry the Third's time the Pope gave a Bull or diploma to a Company of Italian Architects to travell up and downe over all Europe to build Churches. From these are derived the *Fraternity of Free-Masons*. They are known to one another by certayn Signes and Watch words: it continues to this day. They have Severall Lodges in severall Counties for their reception: and when any of them fall into decay, the brotherhood is to relieve him, &c. The manner of their adoption is very formall [*please note this*], and with an Oath of Secrecy."

Very much to the same effect are the opinions of Sir Christopher Wren and Elias Ashmole. Upon the strength of these great names, it was customary for a very long period to fix the establishment of the Freemasons in England about the early part of the reign of Henry III., at which period, it was averred, that Gothic Architecture—which first of all began in the East—came forward into practice as a regular established order, and the inference was suggested (as being irresistible) that the invention and introduction of this bold and very highly scientific order of architecture must be referred to these chosen and selected artists.†

Just fifty years ago, however, Sir Francis Palgrave observed:—"The number of writers, at home and abroad, who have discussed the origin of Gothic architecture, and each of whom drives his own theory round his own park, is probably now not much less than a hundred. Yet, as far as we can judge, no one of these enquirers every persuaded another to adopt his own opinion."‡

During the half century which has elapsed since the foregoing statement first saw the light, a great host of additional writers have fastened upon the same theme, and a few words expressed thereon by myself, in 1883, may not, perhaps, be deemed out of place.

"Gothic is not only the last link in the chain of genuine and original style, the architecture of the modern as distinguished from that of the ancient world, but it was also the product of a peculiar romantic temperament developed at that particular period, which was totally unlike anything that has been seen either before or since, even among the same nations, and which showed itself, not only in architecture, but literature, and even in politics, notably in the great movement of the Crusades."§

"It is good sheltering under an old hedge," but I have a stronger reason for placing before you, as a basis for our inquiry, the alleged connection of the Freemasons with Gothic architecture, than the mere contention that a theory grows venerable by its age.

In the autumn of 1888, the British Archæological Association held its annual session in Glasgow, and among the papers read before it was one by our present Junior Warden, (Professor T. Hayter Lewis), which bore the following title:—"Scottish Masons' Marks compared with those of other countries."

Among the conclusions formulated by this excellent authority, all of which he satisfactorily establishes by comparing the Masons' Marks in our own and foreign countries, are:

1st, That certain definite methods of marking the general surfaces of the stones characterised the masonry of the styles which we call Norman, and that this had apparently a *Western* origin.

* *A. Q. C.*, i., 68.

† *Parentalia, or Memoirs of the Family of the Wrens*, 306; *Archæologia*, ix., 110-26.

‡ *Edinburgh Review*, Ap. 1839.

§ *History of Freemasonry*, i., 256.

2nd, That in the thirteenth century there was introduced, with the Early Pointed Style [which is another name for Gothic], an entirely different method of finishing the surface, and that the source of this method was apparently from the *East*.

3rd, That Masons' Marks do not appear to have been commonly used in Europe until late in the twelfth century.

4th, That some of the most prominent of these marks appear to have been used continuously, from very early times, in Eastern countries.

Our Bro. J.W. then draws attention to the opinion of Viollet le Duc, that the clergy who were in the company of the Crusaders returned to Europe with the knowledge of what had been done by the Saracens, and endeavoured to apply what they had seen—the art of the Saracens having thus a great influence on that of the West.

He next observes:—"I know that it will be said that the evolution of the Pointed [or Gothic] style was that of gradual development. So, no doubt, to a large extent, it was, as must be the case with every invention, no matter what. But I absolutely refuse to believe that so great a change, made in so short a time, was the result of a mere system of gradual improvement; nor can I believe in the theory which would assign the change to a partnership of minds, be they monks or citizens, in monasteries or guilds. In every great movement which the world has seen, some one great mind comes forth as a pioneer: nor can I think that it has been otherwise with our art." Our Bro. J.W. winds up with the following:—"I am not enthusiastic enough to suppose that the marks which the workmen have left will ever be so outspoken as to tell us of the *man*; but I do believe that the search into their meaning—a search which was not even begun until some fifty years since—may lead us to the *place* and to the means by which its influence was so powerfully and quickly spread."

It is not too much to say that Masons' Marks, which have hitherto been regarded by our advanced students, as presenting a sentimental value out of all proportion to their serviceable worth, are now, owing to the research of Professor Hayter Lewis, shewn to be a very important factor in the complicated problem of Masonic history.

According to Sir William Dugdale, or, to put it in another way, according to the popular belief or the oral tradition prevailing in his time, the Freemasons derived their origin from a company of architects empowered "to travell up and downe over all Europe to build churches"—"about Henry the Third's time," *i.e.*, the thirteenth century, while, at the same period, if we follow the Junior Warden, there was introduced with the early Pointed (or Gothic) Style, "an entirely different method of finishing the surface, and that the course of this method was apparently from the East."

"It is good to have two strings to one's bow," or, as otherwise expressed—

"Good riding at two anchors, men have told,
If one fail, the other may hold." †

Those who disregard the opinions ascribed to Sir William Dugdale, Sir Christopher Wren and Elias Ashmole, viewing them as mere assertions, and wholly devoid of proof will, however, look very differently on the careful and close reasoning of Professor T. Hayter Lewis.

Indeed, as it seems to me, the arguments of the Junior Warden, virtually reinstate the old tradition, that is, in its material features, *viz.*, the connection of the Freemasons with Gothic architecture, and the derivation in some measure of that art or style from the East.

In his learned work—"Europe in the Middle Ages"—Hallam tells us:—

"Some have ascribed the principal ecclesiastical structures to the fraternity of Freemasons, depositaries of a concealed and traditionary science. There is probably some ground for this opinion; and the earlier archives of that mysterious association, if they existed, might illustrate the progress of Gothic architecture and perhaps reveal its origin."*

The passage last quoted is a typical one, and in the idea it embodies has of late years been regarded as reaching the high water mark of credulity. But, as we have seen, the essay or paper read by Professor Hayter Lewis, says, in effect, almost, if not quite the same thing, the only difference being, that in recommending a search for the origin and progress of Gothic architecture, the Professor is the more practical guide of the two, as instead of looking for archives which do not exist, he prudently counsels a careful examination of the marks or emblems wrought by the Mediæval Masons—which are to be met with at this day.

* *Edit.* 1853, iii., 358.

It will be in the recollection of my hearers, that the Junior Warden advances a very daring hypothesis. He says:—

“In every great movement that the world has seen, some one great mind comes forth as its pioneer; nor can I think that it has been otherwise with our art.”

He does not believe in the theory which would assign the change from the Norman to the Early Pointed (or Gothic) Style to a partnership of minds, be they monks or citizens in monasteries or guilds.

Thus, instead of a school, he boldly suggests that it is a Man, to whom we must look as the pioneer of the great architectural movement which set in during the 13th century.

“The stream can never rise above the spring head,” so, if such a master-mind there was, the genealogy of the Freemasons, so far at least as it synchronizes with the rise of Gothic architecture, is exhausted.

But let us see whether the idea thrown out by Bro. Hayter Lewis can be utilised in the particular inquiry we are pursuing.

If the Early Pointed Style of Architecture (one of the phases of Gothic) was due to the genius and commanding personality of an individual, it may be fairly assumed, that like the youngest son of King Athelstan, as recorded in the Masonic document* standing next in point of antiquity to the Regius MS.,

“Of speculatyfo ho was a master,”

or, in other words, that he was amply skilled in the *knowledge*, as well as in the *practice* of the science of geometry, and a proficient, so to speak, both in speculative and in operative Masonry.†

After the Early Pointed, came another phase of Gothic,‡ the Middle or Perfect Pointed Style, known in England by the name of Decorated. It lasted from the end of the 13th to the end of the 14th century, and during this period immense progress had been made in the *technique* of the art. Stone had become, so to speak, as ductile as wax in the hands of the builders, who had surmounted every difficulty of construction. After the Decorated Style, the finest age of Gothic architecture is at an end. Still, though English architects appear, after the close of the 14th century, to lose something in wealth of spontaneous invention, the feeling for beauty or ornamental work was not yet to decay till at least the royal chapels of Windsor, Westminster, and Cambridge, and other fascinating fan-roofed buildings, were finished,—with which the true Gothic Architecture of England went out “in a blaze of glory” under the Tudors.

Yet, although with the construction of the Churches and Cathedrals of the 13th and 14th centuries, the vitality of Gothic as a pure style of construction came to an end, many futile attempts to reproduce the style were made, and the practice was continued down to the death of Queen Elizabeth (1602). But by this time the great object for which Gothic had been invented—the suitable celebration of a gorgeous religious ceremonial, by which an unlettered nation might be instructed, impressed and governed—had ceased to exist, and after the Reformation, as soon as other means for the instruction of the people were provided, the Gothic cathedral was employed for other purposes, the Gothic style of architecture all but died out, and its constructive principles and processes, *and even its traditions*—as I shall hereafter more particularly suggest to you—were forgotten.

Thus the decline of Mediæval Architecture was due to natural causes, like the fall of monasticism and all things mediæval, and the one followed suit on the other. No more churches were built, and hence the builders died out; and with them, to a great extent, I believe, died the skill in arch and vault building, which was, perhaps, the great characteristic of the builders of the Middle Ages.

Gothic, however, never quite died out, and I shall now suggest to you, that the same thing may be predicated with regard to the Symbolism of the Craft—if it existed at all, within the period covered by the rise and fall of Mediæval Operative Masonry.

Reasoning by analogy, there is evidence from which a belief that it did exist will spring up in many minds.

* Mus. Brit., *Add. MS.* 23, 198, ll. 623-4.

† The following distinction was drawn by Addison—March 1, 1711—between a speculative and a practical member of a trade or profession:—“I live in the world rather as a spectator of mankind, than as one of the species, by which means I have made myself a speculative statesman, soldier, merchant, and artisan, without ever meddling with any practical part in life.”—*Spectator*, No. 1.

‡ The usual designation, ‘Gothic Style,’ took its rise amongst the Italians. By it they meant to distinguish a barbarous from a classic style, and this inapt appellation has become so familiar that it is difficult to get rid of it. For want of a better name, the term ‘Pointed Style’ might in all cases be preferred to a term which signifies nothing, and which is only used from force of habit.—Rosengarten, *Architectural Styles*, 288.

"In the oldest of the Chinese Classics—the *Book of History*—which embraces a period reaching from the twenty-fourth to the seventh century before Christ, we meet with distinct allusions to the Symbolism of the Masons' art. But even if we begin," says Mr. Giles, "where the *Book of History* ends, we find curious masonic expressions to have been in use—at any rate in the written language—more than seven hundred years before the Christian era; that is to say, only about a couple of hundred years after the death of King Solomon himself." Also, in a famous canonical work, called *THE GREAT LEARNING*, which is referred to the fifth century before our era we read, that a man should abstain from doing unto others what he would not they should do unto him; "and this," adds the writer, "is called the principle of acting on the square." Mr. Giles also quotes from Confucius, B.C. 481, and from his great follower, Mencius, who flourished nearly two hundred years later. In the writings of the last-named philosopher, it is taught that men should apply the square and compasses figuratively to their lives, and the level and the marking line besides, if they would walk in the straight and even paths of wisdom, and keep themselves within the bounds of honour and virtue. In Book VI. of his philosophy we find these words:—

"A Master Mason, in teaching his apprentices, makes use of the compasses and the square. Ye who are engaged in the pursuit of wisdom must also make use of the compasses and square."*

Bro. Chaloner Alabaster tells us:—"Going then to the records we possess of the earliest historic times in China, I find clear evidence of the existence of a mystic faith expressed in allegoric form, and illustrated, as with us, by symbols. The secrets of this faith were orally transmitted, the chiefs alone pretending to have full knowledge of them. I find, moreover, that in these earliest ages this faith took a Masonic form, the secrets being recorded in symbol buildings like to the Tabernacle Moses put up in the desert, and the Temple his successor Solomon built in Jerusalem; that the various offices in the hierarchy of this religion were distinguished by the symbolic jewels held by them during their term of office, and that, as with us, at the rites of their religion they wore leather aprons, such as have come down to us, marked with the insignia of their rank."†

According to the same authority, the mysteries of this ancient faith have now become lost, or at best obscured, though attempts at a revival may be traced in the proceedings of existing brotherhoods, whose various rituals and signs are supposed to be in some measure founded on ancient rites and symbols which have been handed down from the earliest ages.‡

The preceding extracts I shall use no farther than to assume, on the strength of them, that among a very ancient people, and prior to the Christian era, there was a moralization of the implements of the Masons' trade, together with a symbolical teaching which in course of time became lost or obscured.

Indeed, the first learning of the world consisted chiefly of symbols. "The wisdom of all the Ancients that is come to our hands," says Dr. Stukeley, "is symbolic." Also, as it is well put by Dr. Barlow, "emblems, symbols, types, all have this in common: they are the representatives of something else for which they stand."‡

The last definition is that upon which I shall rely, in advancing the hypothesis that with emblems, symbols, or types, the stonemasons of the 14th century were familiar.

"During the splendour of Mediæval Operative Masonry," observes Bro. Albert Pike, "the art of building stood above all other arts, and made all others subservient to it. It commanded the services of the most brilliant intellects, and of the greatest artists."

Very much to the same effect, though somewhat differently expressed, are the remarks of Professor Rogers, who states:—

"I have never studied the history of the Craft, but there can be no reason to believe that any very important principles of so mechanical an art as architecture were incommunicable except to these mystics, if indeed the brethren for whom so remote an antiquity and so widespread an association, is claimed by their whimsical representatives in modern times, had any virtual existence. I am disposed to believe that just as when one sense is extinguished in any person the rest are stimulated to preternatural acuteness, so in the ages with which we are concerned, when literature was so scanty, and the means of occupation so unvaried, the single art which was developed in any notable degree was studied with such intensity and concentration as to bring about results which we, in our wider modes of thought, study and application, find it difficult, if not impossible, to rival."§

It is well known that the symbolical method of instruction, which had been in use from the earliest times in Egypt, was adopted by the Jews. Hence under the cloak of

* Giles, *Freemasonry in China*, 4, 6, 8; Legge, *Chinese Classics*, i., 219-45. † *A.Q.C.*, ii., 120. ‡ *Ibid.*
‡ *Proc. R.I.B.A.*, ii., 97. § *History of Agriculture and Prices in England*, from 1259 to 1793, i., 257.

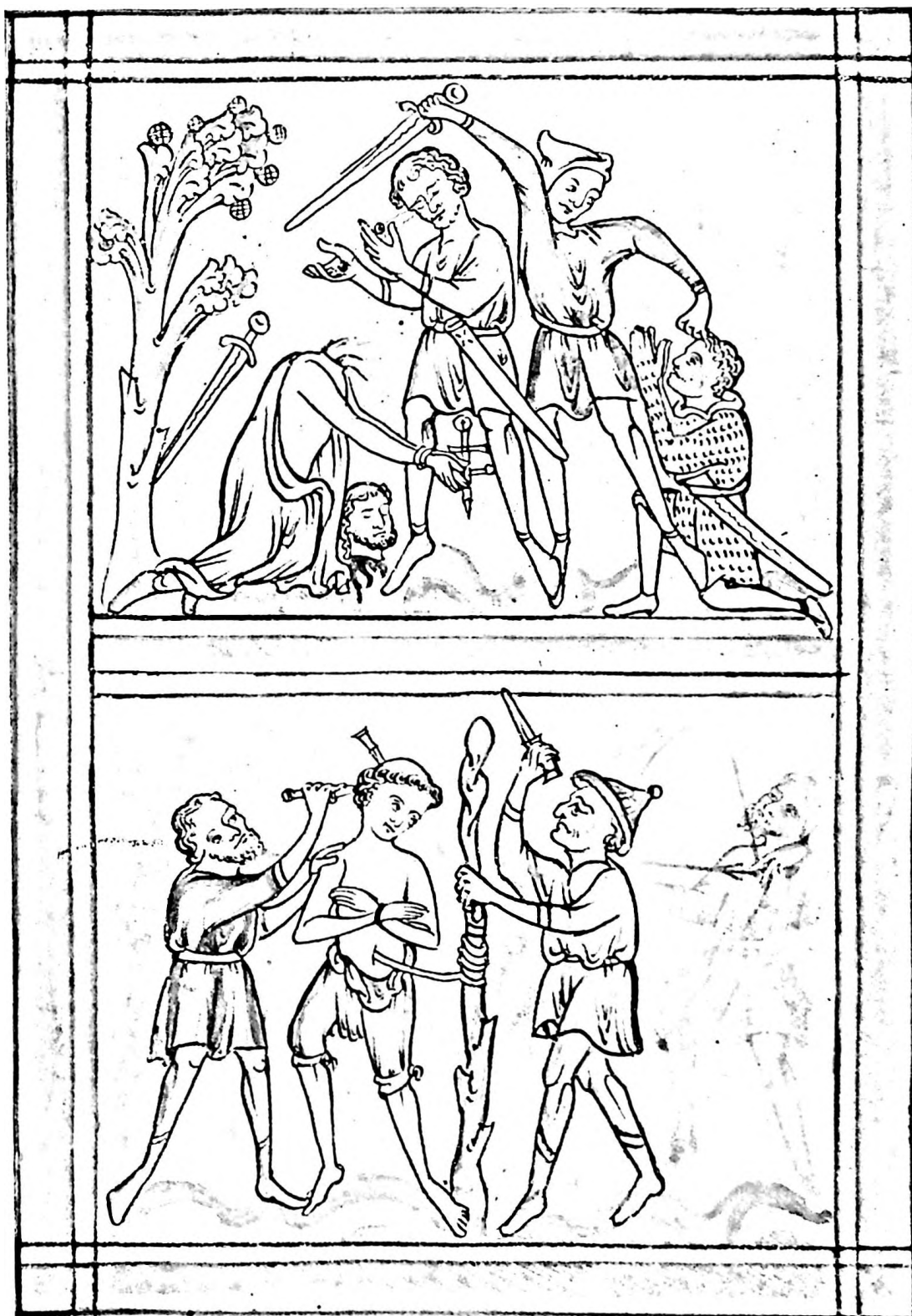


Photo by Donald Macbeth.]

[London.

MARTYRDOMS OF ST ALBAN AND ST. AMPHIBALUS.

(From a 15th Century MS.—Harl. No. 2, B. vi.—in the British Museum.)

Upper picture, St. Alban; lower picture, St. Amphibalus.



symbols, Pagan philosophy gradually crept into the Jewish schools, and the Platonic doctrines, mixed first with Pythagorean, and afterwards with the Egyptian and Oriental, were blended with their ancient faith in their explanations of the law and the traditions. The society of the Therapoutae was formed after the model of the Pythagorean system; Aristobulus, Philo, and others, studied the Grecian philosophy, and the Cabbalists formed their mystic system upon the foundation of the tenets taught in the Alexandrian schools.

From various causes, between the third century and the tenth, but few traces of the Cabbalistic mysteries are to be met with in the writings of the Jews, but their peculiar learning began to revive when the Saracens became the patrons of philosophy, and their schools subsequently migrated to Spain, where they attained the highest distinction. These in the 13th and 14th centuries became the resort of Christian artisans, to instruct themselves in the useful arts. The Universities of Toledo, Cordova, Seville, and Granada, were sought by the pale student from other lands, to acquaint himself with the sciences of the Arabs, and the treasured lore of antiquity.

There can, indeed, be little or any doubt, that with the termination of Mediæval operative Masonry, many of the most abstruse and abstract principles of the building art were wholly lost. For this a reason has been suggested—which may possibly be true—that these principles were presented in symbolic form.

But however this may be, it is at least certain that in the 13th and 14th centuries, the unlimited resources of architectural skill were everywhere applied to develop divine ideas through symbolized stone. The single object which presented itself to the Masonic architect was to find suitable expressions for the heart yearnings and moral aspirations of the people.* Nor was symbolization unknown to the actual workmen or stone-masons. Our early operative brethren, though somewhat coarse, were in their way extremely witty. Stone caricatures are still to be met with, equal in strength and coarseness to those of Rowlandson and Gillray, nor need we be astonished to find a good deal turn upon the clergy, as do a great number of those of our English draughtsmen, especially in the matter of tithe; and these, together with indecencies which are, after all, not quite unknown in more refined ages, were probably the amusements of grimly-humorous workmen, when they thought they could indulge in them without fear of discovery. Thus in old churches and cathedrals we find portrayed, a nun in the embraces of a monk, a Pope descending to hell at the last judgment, a fox in priest's robes preaching to a congregation of geese, an ass performing high mass, etc.

That the class of workmen last referred to, possessed some knowledge of architectural symbolism, or to use more familiar words, that they symbolised the implements of their trade, has been assumed by many writers, a conclusion to which I am also led, and although incapable of strict proof, may, as it seems to me, be fortified to some slight extent by analogy.

We have already seen that during the splendour of Mediæval Operative Masonry, the art of building, stood at the head of all the other arts, but there is a remarkable circumstance connected with the Masons' trade, to which I shall next advert, in further illustration of its unquestionable supremacy.

By no other craft in Great Britain has documentary evidence been furnished of its having claimed at any time a legendary or traditional history.

Our written traditions are carried back—speaking roundly—to the 14th century, and to me at least, it does not appear one whit more extraordinary, that our symbolical traditions may have enjoyed an existence in a period of time equally remote.

This leads us to the next branch of my general subject, the written traditions of the Freemasons, in the earliest of which, as we shall presently see, there is much to confirm the idea I have already thrown out, that symbolical Masonry was coeval with the most ancient writings of the Craft that have come down to us.

To pass, however, to our written traditions, there are in the first instance, two histories of, or disquisitions upon, Masonry or Geometry, dating—according to the British Museum Authorities—from about—1425, and afterwards a long series of documents dating from about 150 years later, to which the name of Manuscript Constitutions has been applied. Of the two histories or disquisitions, one is in metrical and the other in prose† form, and it is with the former, the Regius MS. or Masonic poem, (in the present inquiry) that we are alone concerned. This manuscript, evidently belonged to a guild or fraternity of

* Fort, *Antiquities of Freemasonry*, 154.

† *Brit. Mus. Add. MS.*, 23, 198; to be published in the next volume of our reprints, with a commentary by the Secretary.

Masons, as it gives the legendary history of their Craft, and furnishes regulations for their conduct. But it is chiefly remarkable on account of the last hundred lines being almost exactly the same as a non-Masonic poem, called *Urbanitatis*, giving minute directions of behaviour—in the presence of a lord—at table—and among ladies—all of which being clearly intended for *gentlemen* of those days, it has been argued, would have been out of place in a code of manners drawn up for the use of a Guild or Craft of artisans, and hence that the MS. must have been possessed by a Guild or fraternity, which commemorated the science, but without practising the art of masonry, that is, that they were what we should now call, speculative or Symbolical Masons.*

It is stated, in the introduction to the Masonic Poem, that the craft of geometry was founded in Egypt by Euclid, and given the name of Masonry; and an reference thereto, Bro. Albert Pike† says:—"Many of the symbols of the old religions, of Pythagoras, and of the Hermetics of later days, were geometrical figures. . . Some of these were symbolic because they represented certain numbers, even among the Assyrians and Babylonians. To the knowledge of these symbols, perhaps, the name 'geometry' was given, to avert suspicions and danger. The architects of churches revelled in symbolism of the most recondite kind. The Pyramids are wonders of Geometrical science. Geometry was the handmaid of Symbolism. . . Symbolism, it may be said, is speculative Geometry."

In the preceding views all indeed may not concur, but the point should not escape us, that in the oldest writing of our Craft—for such the Regius MS. undoubtedly is—we meet with *inculcations which are very far removed from the mental range of the operative brethren to whom the Manuscript Constitutions were rehearsed at a later era.*

This will accord with the supposition that Masonry as a speculative science declined or fell into decay, *pari passu*, with Masonry as an operative art.

Leaving these two histories of, or disquisitions upon Masonry, which date as before stated, at about the year 1425, let me next take you to the Manuscript Constitutions, of which the oldest dated form is the "Grand Lodge" MS. of the year 1583.

Between these two periods there is a gap of 158 years, and with regard to it there are some considerations for which a further quotation will assist in preparing us.

The Rev. W. Denton, in his *England in the 15th Century*, tells us:—

"What was true of morals and material wealth was true also of art. Architecture had yielded to the spirit of the age; it had lost much of its nobleness, though it had not yet descended to the depths it afterwards reached. The hand of the English sculptor had grown stiff, and the forms from his chisel no longer vied in grace with the productions of the Italian artist. Henry VII. came to the Throne at the close of the long and savage War of the Roses. During the continuance of the struggle the nation went back in many ways from the refinement of the 14th century. The cultivation even of house fruits ceased with the ruin of houses and manors and the desolation of orchards and gardens. The population dwindled. The arts lost their vigour and beauty. The architecture, sculpture and metal work were not equal to what they had been, and fresh life was needed when peace was once more secured.

In the beginning of the reign of Henry VIII., we have the complaint of Sir Thomas Elyot, which would have sounded strange in the ears of a contemporary of Edward I., that "in painting and carving, in graving and embroidery, Englishmen be inferior to all other people."‡

* *Quatuor Coronatorum Antigrapha*, i., 49, 50.

† To quote still further from the same high authority:—"I am quite ready to believe, and think it can be shown, that there had been symbolism in Masonry long before 1717, but that the working class of Masons in the Lodges had no knowledge of it, it being confined to the men who, of another class, united themselves with the Lodges. If that was even so, those Lodges which had no members of that class had no symbolism in their Masonry. So that I do not think we can be warranted in *assuming* that, among Masons generally,—in the *body* of Masonry,—the symbolism of Free-Masonry is of earlier date than 1717: while I think you *can* prove, that among Freemasons of a certain class and limited number, the same symbolism, or a larger part of the same, afterwards placed in the degrees, did exist before, perhaps some centuries before, 1717."

Too much weight cannot be attached to any conclusions of Bro. Albert Pike, and especially with regard to Masonic Symbolism. Hence, I gladly reproduce in this note, a view that is in direct opposition to my own.

Like our excellent Bro. Pike, I believe in the hoar antiquity of Masonic Symbolism; but unlike him, I also believe that it had become the inheritance of "the working class of Masons in the [English] Lodges." before 1717. By whom it was originally introduced, and when, are questions, however, towards the solution of which I can only cherish the hope that the present paper may in some slight degree pave the way.

‡ Denton, 123; Pollen, *Gold and Silversmith's Work*, 233-35; Sir Thos. Elyot, *The Governour*, 46.

In Scotland, the deterioration of the arts was even greater. "The victory of Bannockburn drove from Scotland the very elements of its growing civilization and its material wealth. The artisans of North Britain were at that time mostly English. These retired, or were driven from Scotland, and with them the commercial importance of the Scottish towns was lost. The estates held by Englishmen in Scotland were confiscated, and the wealth which through the hands of these proprietors had found its way from the southern parts of the kingdom and fertilized the more barren soil of the north, at once ceased.

No cathedral was built after the reign of David I. in 1153, and almost every monastery was founded before the death of Alexander III. in 1286. All these marks of refined taste and religious zeal, of wealth and public spirit ceased with the rebellion of Bruce."*

It will be seen, therefore, that while England went back many degrees in civilization during the Wars of the Roses, an even greater relapse into comparative anarchy took place in Scotland owing to the War of Independence.

These historical gleanings will aid our comprehension of the extreme simplicity of the Scottish Masonic ritual, as generally known to have existed in the 17th century. In what was then the leading Magazine of the Craft, Bro. W. P. Buchan—at that time one of the foremost investigators of Scottish Masonic history—thus expressed himself in 1869:—"Seeing how difficult it is even now, with all the aids to help and oft-recurring meetings, to get office-bearers and brethren to work our ceremonies properly, how did the old Lodges get on before 1717, who only met once a year? Oh, how elaborate must the ceremony have been when one Mason could make another? Or, where could brethren learn our present system had such been in use before 1717?"†

To indulge in a further quotation from the same writer:—"Those who indulge in dreams about the mysterious sciences (!) taught in pre-eighteenth century Masons' Lodges, only retail the groundless fancies of a heated imagination, while those who assert that the Masons occupied a higher position in the public estimation than any of the other Crafts are mistaken. The old Weavers used to carry a pretty high head, and Edward III., of England joined the 'Linen Armourers,' and if it were properly looked into, in a truthful manner, we would find that the operative Masons some centuries ago were no greater geniuses than they are at present. In fact, [*and here I ask your special attention*], the question is open to investigation whether the progress of the art of building, say in Britain, *e.g.*, has it or has it not kept pace with the progress of the other arts?"‡

I have quoted from Bro. Buchan, for whom as a Masonic student I have a great respect, for a double purpose. First of all, because he puts into vigorous and incisive language a theory or belief, which is in direct opposition to the hypothesis I am presenting to you this evening; and secondly, because from the point of view I am now arguing, I think it can be shown that both facts on which he bases his own inference, *viz.*, the decay of the building art, and the simplicity of the Lodge ceremonial before 1717, may equally well represent cause and effect, and if so, not only do not militate against, but are in exact harmony with, the line of argument I am submitting for your consideration.

Let me now return to the Manuscript Constitutions, whose place in Masonic history I shall next attempt to define.

You may have noticed just now, that while alluding to the early Scottish Masonic ceremonial, I said nothing about its English equivalent. Of this indeed, we know little or nothing, for the Manuscript Constitutions, which, in a certain sense, may be described as "tombs without an epitaph," convey very scanty information with regard to living Freemasonry in the South. We know, indeed, that they were used, *i.e.*, read over to candidates of the operative class, at their reception into the Lodge, but as to the formulary observed at the admission of gentlemen we are ignorant.§

Lodge minutes there are none, that is, of earlier date than the 18th century, and here a word of caution must be thrown out, against the too prevalent habit of confounding the systems of Masonry prevailing in Scotland and England respectively, the one with the other.

* Denton, 30.

† *Freemason's Magazine*, (1869), 409.

‡ *Ibid.*, 483.

§ While anxious not to overload the text with digressions, I cannot resist the temptation of suggesting in a note, that in attempting to explore the remote past of our Society, a careful study of the written should precede that of the symbolical traditions of Masonry. For this many reasons might be assigned, but I shall content myself by giving one, which is, that (as stated above) of the ancient formulary of reception we are only certain with regard to a single point,—*the legend and laws of the Craft were rehearsed*. That "the manner of adoption was very formal," we also know, though only in a general way, but the said rehearsal and formality really constitute all that is absolutely known of the symbolism (as forming a part of the ceremonial) of the early Lodges.

It is of course both easy and natural to do so. Each system presents some evidence in which the other is lacking, but we shall find I think in both cases, that like streams of water flowing in divergent courses from a common source, they have grown more impure the farther they have run from the fountain-head.

In both countries, during the 17th century, there was speculative as well as operative membership in these Lodges. Yet a difference is found which should be noted. In Scotland, the Lodges existed for trade purposes, but in England not exclusively so; indeed, quite the reverse, if we limit our observation to the only 17th century Lodges, of which any particulars have come down to us.

From this it will at least be a plausible conjecture—I shall put it no higher for the present—that while in the one instance—Scotland—the ancient symbolism of Masonry had descended to the level of the ordinary artisan; in the other instance—England—more of the old framework still existed.

Much light would be shed on this point if there were English minutes to refer to, but as the English Lodges were not kept together for trade purposes—like the Scotch—they must have some other *raison d'être* for their continuance, which if it were not a fuller ceremonial, and more ornate ritual, than was usual in the North—lands us in a still greater puzzle than that which we are attempting to solve.

I have already stated on the authority of Sir William Dugdale, what in the 17th century appears to have been the popular belief with regard to the Freemasons, and let us not forget that :—

“ Common fame,
Is seldom to blame.”

The Freemasons, we are told by Dugdale, “ are known to one another by certayn signes & watch-words .∴ The manner of their adoption is *very formall*.”

That there was a plurality of signs, we also find stated by Dr. Plot, in 1686,* and a plurality of “ words and signes” is attested by a manuscript dating from about 1665.†

In 1709, that is to say, eight years prior to the establishment of the earliest of Grand Lodges, Mr. (afterwards Sir Richard) Steele, wrote, in a journal called the Tatler, about a certain class of people, of whom he says :—

“ *They have their signs and tokens like Free-Masons.*”

In 1717, as previously explained, the Grand Lodge of England was founded by four London Lodges, and as for about two hundred years all the London Companies have, with insignificant exceptions, ceased to be connected in any real way with the trades whose names they bear, I must not exclude any evidence from which it has or may be contended, that the Society, remodelled in 1717, was a Company of Freemasons, that at some previous time had relinquished the occupation which gave them a name. Such evidence will be found in *Harl. MS.*, 1942, and the *Antiquity MS.* These are copies or versions of the MS. Constitutions, and in the former which, as a written document, dates from about the beginning of the 17th century, the following occurs among the charges and inculcations :—

4thly. “ You shall secure and keepe secret the obscure and intricate parts of the science, not disclosing them to any but such as study & use the same.”

The same MS. uses the expression “ accepted free Mason,” who is required to provide himself with a certificate from the Lodge that “ accepted him,” and there is a clause which I quote at length :—

“ That for the future the sayd Society, Companie, & fraternity of Freemasons shallbee regulated, & governed by one Master, & Assembly, & Wardens, as ye said Company shall think fit to chose, at every yearely generall Assembly.”

The “Antiquity” MS., the other copy of the MS. Constitutions, has the following attestation clause :—

“ Written by Robert Madgett, Clarke to the Worshippfull Society of the Free Masons of the City of London in the second yeare of the Raigne of our most Gracious Sovereign Lord King James the Second of England, &c. Annoq Domini, 1686.”

Here, then, we have two pieces of evidence, one telling us that in the beginning of the 17th century the government of the Society, Company, and fraternity of Free Masons, was confided to one Master, Assembly, and Wardens. And the other, that towards the close of the same century, viz., in 1686, there was a copy of the MS. Constitutions, written by the clerk of “ the Worshippfull Society of the Free Masons of the City of London,” which it is possible may have been the identical Society, Company, or fraternity of Free Masons, founded, or as it were, welded together, about 60 or 70 years previously.

* *Nat. Hist. of Staffordshire*, 316-18.

† *Harl. MS.*, 2054.

These documents, however, leave much to be desired. They come down to us very insufficiently attested, and are uncorroborated by evidence from any other quarter, which would be admissible in a court of law. The silence, therefore, of all the other versions of the Manuscript Constitutions with regard to points of such importance, and as one might naturally suppose, of such notoriety, has led most students to regard them as among those puzzles that are occasionally met with in Masonic history, which in the absence of further evidence are insoluble.*

Still, "all feet tread not in one shoe," and I must not omit to state, in fairness to a minority of students, who may be satisfied as to the authenticity of these documents—that in the City Companies there have always been three grades of members. The first was that of freeman or freewoman; the second, membership of the livery; and the third, a seat in the Court. Here, some may think we have the frame work of our three degrees of Speculative or Symbolical Masonry.

The foundation of the Grand Lodge of England was a great event, and has been styled "the *Revival*, of AD. 1717," which indeed it may have been, though not in the sense generally employed, viz., as the resuscitation of a pre-existing Grand Lodge. The late Bro. Woodford said with much force:—"Where did the Freemasonry of 1717 come from? To accept for one moment the suggestion that so complex and curious a system, embracing so many archaic remains, and such skilfully adjusted ceremonies, so much connected matter, accompanied by so many striking symbols, could have been the creation of a pious fraud or ingenious conviviality, presses heavily on our powers of belief, and even passes over the normal credulity of our species. *The traces of antiquity are too many to be overlooked or ignored.*"†

Nor is it indeed, in my own judgment, entertainable for an instant, that the old London Masons of 1717 would have looked calmly on, had the forms and ceremonies to which they were accustomed been as suddenly metamorphosed, as it has become, to some considerable extent the fashion to believe.

Neither can we credit that at the close of Ancient, and the beginning of Modern, Masonry, there was an instantaneous change of actors—the old part retiring and the new one coming in. One generation of men, as Hume remarks, does not go off the stage at once, and another succeed, as is the case with silkworms and butterflies.‡

The continuity of the Society, which was maintained by a constant succession of new members, may be compared to that of a woven cloth, the stitches of which interlace, so that its texture is not divisible into intervals or stages.

It was thus very different from the continuity of any one Lodge, which perhaps may be likened to that of a chain formed of single links.

Four Lodges, at least, took part in the so-called "Revival" of 1717, and both the Grand Master (Sayer), and the Grand Senior Warden (Lamball), then elected, remained active members of the Grand Lodge, until long after the "Epoch of Transition."

But I must proceed by steps. The Society of Freemasons established on a new basis in 1717, made very slow progress in public favour. Dr. Stukeley, the celebrated antiquary, tells us in his diary, under the date of January 6th, 1721—on which day he was initiated—"I was the first person made a Freemason in London for many years. We had great difficulty to find members enough to perform the ceremony. Immediately upon that it took a run, and ran itself out of breath thro' the folly of the members."

The "run" referred to by Dr. Stukeley, took place, no doubt, owing to the *prestige* acquired by the Society in the same year, through the acceptance by the Duke of Montagu of the Grand Mastership, and it was also in the same year, 1721, that Mr. James Anderson, a Scottish Presbyterian Minister, was selected by the Grand Master and Grand Lodge to revise the old, or Manuscript Constitutions of the fraternity—which saw the light in 1723.

Mr., or as he afterwards became, Dr. Anderson, was, as you already know, a graduate of Marischal College, Aberdeen, and I shall now submit to you the extreme probability that he was also a graduate of the Masonic Lodge in that city.

* It is worthy of recollection, however, that beginning with the earliest period of *Modern* Masonry there has been a great falsification of Masonic documents. Thus, the old MS. Constitutions were freely "embellished" by Dr. Anderson, and subsequently a variety of spurious Charters and MS., alleged to be both Ancient and Masonic, found their way into print. See further, *Hist. of F.*, chap. xi. (*Apocryphal MSS.*), and *A.Q.C.*, i., 80. (Forged versions of the MS. Constitutions).

† *A.Q.C.*, i., 30.

‡ *Essays*, ii., 12.

The three degrees of pure and ancient Masonry, viz., those of Master Mason, Fellow Craft,* and Entered Apprentice, bear titles which were evidently borrowed from the vocabulary of Scotland. Master Mason, it is true, was a term common in both kingdoms, but viewed in conjunction with the others, the *three* expressions may be regarded as having been taken *en bloc* from the operative terminology of the northern kingdom.

All these expressions will be found on the Schav Statutes—1598—the records of Mary's Chapel, Edinburgh—1601—and the Laws of the Aberdeen Lodge—1670—(Scottish documents). But the same terms—Master Mason, Fellow Craft, and Entered Apprentice, as grades of *symbolical Masonry*, are not alluded to in any book or manuscript of earlier date than 1723. Indeed, with the exception of the first-named—Master Mason—the expressions themselves do not occur—at least I have never met with them in the course of my reading—in the records of the building trades, or in the printed or manuscript literature of England preceding the publication of Dr. Anderson's "Book of Constitutions," produced, according to the mandate received by him from the Grand Lodge of England, in 1723.

The question then is, whence did the doctor derive them? which renders it essential that we should take a closer view of the system of Masonry, under which there can be little or any doubt, that he himself had acquired his knowledge of the Craft.

The oldest register of the Aberdeen Lodge is dated 1670, and contains the names of 49 members, who are described as "the Authoires of and Subscriuers of this Book."

The Master was "Harrie Elphinstone," collector of the King's Customs. Four noblemen were among the members, and of the whole 49, eight only are estimated to have been operative Masons. From this circumstance it is usually supposed, and I think rightly, that the large speculative membership of the Lodge must date back many years at least.

The 11th signature in the register is that of the Scribe, described as

"James Anderson, Glassier and Measson, and wreatter of this book,"

And curiously enough, his namesake, Dr. James Anderson, the Presbyterian Minister, not only imitates the form in which the signatures are shown on the Aberdeen roll, when he gives the names of the representatives of the English Lodges who signed the 1st Book of Constitutions in 1723, but also fills in his own as

" James Anderson, A.M.,
The Author of *this Book*," } Master.

This strengthens the presumption of Dr. Anderson's connection with the Lodge, as well as with the University of Aberdeen, and there is further evidence from which the same may be inferred, though space forbids my doing more than indicate where it may be found.†

Among the "Lawes and Statutes" ordained by the Lodge of Aberdeen, on the 27th December, 1670, are the following:—

"Wee ordaine that no Lodge be holden within a dwelling house where there is people living in it, but in the open fields except it be ill weather, and then let a house be chosen that no person shall heir or sie us. (3rd stat.)

"Wee ordaine lykwayes that all entering prentieses be entered in our antient out-field Lodge, in the mearnes in the parish of Negg, at the stonnies at the poynt of the Ness." (5th stat.)

Now it is very remarkable that we have here, in these "Lawes" of the Aberdeen Lodge of 1670, the *only* evidence which throws any light whatever on the actual ritual of the Ancient Masons—by which I mean the catechism or formulary, in use at the reception of a new member, prior to the formation of the Grand Lodge of England in 1717.

There is absolutely no evidence at all from English sources, and only the above quoted laws from any Scottish one.

It was the practice, as we have seen, of the Aberdeen Masons to hold their Lodge and enter their apprentices in the open air. Next let me read you some extracts from publications which appeared after Dr. Anderson had printed his Book of Constitutions in 1723,

The 1st is from the "Mason's Examination," also published in 1723. It says:—

Q. Where was you made?

* "Fellow" (or "Master"), is the *English* equivalent for the *Scottish* "Fellow-Craft" (or "Master"). Thus Elias Ashmole says in his diary—11th March, 1682—"I was the Senior *Fellow* among them," and he gives the names of the other "*Fellowes*" also present at the Lodge held at Mason's Hall, London. "Good Brethren and Fellowes," meaning Apprentices, and (in the old sense) "pass'd Masters" who had been admitted to the freedom of their Craft—are expressions which will be found in most versions of the MS. Constitutions. They come in directly after the Invocation, and immediately before the Legend of the Guild.
† *Hist. of F.*, ii., 292; 354; iii., 472.

A. In the valley of Jehosophet, behind a Rush-bush where a Dog was never heard, to bark, or Cock crow, or elsewhere.

The 2nd is from "The Grand Mystery of the Freemasons Discover'd," printed in 1724 :—

Q. How many make a Lodge?

A. God and the Square, with Five or Seven right and perfect Masons, on the highest Mountains, or the lowest Valleys in the World.

The 3rd is from "Masonry dissected," 1730—

Q. Where does the Lodge stand?

A. Upon Holy Ground, or the highest Hill, or lowest Vale, or in the Vale of Jehosaphat, or any other Secret Place.

Now if we look closely into these catechisms—that of 1723 mentions the "Valley of Jehosophet," but *not* the highest hills and lowest valleys. The next one, of 1724, does just the opposite—the "Valley of Jehosophat" is *not* named, but "the highest Mountains and lowest Valleys" *are*; while in the catechism of 1730 we find both phrases in full—from which we may, I think, conclude, that by incorporating what was given in the two others, it really goes back beyond or behind them, and reproduces in an ampler form, many details of a still earlier catechism than has come down to us.

These pretended revelations must be handled with due caution. In the year 1730, Deputy Grand Master Blackerby spoke in the Grand Lodge of the author of "Masonry Dissected" as "an Impostor," and "of his Book as a foolish thing not to be regarded." But even a sullied stream is a blessing compared to a total drought, and in the absence of evidence upon which we can confidently rely, even waifs and strays from the most tainted sources are not to be disregarded, provided they bear at least the impress of antiquity.*

We may assume, however, from the publications I have cited, without endeavouring either to reconcile their discrepancies, which would be a manifest impossibility, or to look for meanings which probably never had any existence, that the practice of Lodges meeting, and of persons being made Masons, in the open air, and under conditions favourable for secrecy, was at least an article of popular belief in 1723-30, and in it we find an echo or survival of the usage so strictly enjoined by the statutes of the Lodge of Aberdeen, in 1670.

Upon this two claims may be founded,—the first, that many real customs observed in Modern Masonry (1723-30), may also rest on a similar basis of antiquity, although no actual proofs are forthcoming; and secondly, if any part whatever of the ritual of Modern Masonry was founded on the Ancient Masonry prevailing at Aberdeen in 1670, it would again be carried back—but how far I will leave you to decide for yourselves—as it is a moral certainty that the customs of a Lodge composed of forty-nine members, of whom all but eight were Speculative or Symbolical Masons, had not all grown up in a day.

Whether the Masonry of Aberdeen, and inferentially of that existing in some other parts of Scotland, was *sui generis*, or an importation from England, cannot be determined, but the latter supposition, if we accord due weight to the predominance of operative Masonry as a living art, in the South, seems to be the more probable of the two.

The next question for our consideration is, did Dr. Anderson remodel the ancient ritual as well as the ancient laws of the Freemasons? The subject however is enveloped by too much confusion for a definite reply to be possible. It is probable that he did, and that we owe to him the introduction of the Scottish operative titles, and the expansion of the system of degrees, though it is quite possible that the third degree, by which I do not mean a new ceremony, but an alteration in the method of imparting the old ones, was the work of other hands.

In Dr. Anderson's Book of Constitutions, 1723, two grades only of Freemasons are mentioned, Entered Apprentice and Fellow Craft or Master, the same as existed in the Lodge of Aberdeen. But about 1725 the titles of Fellow Craft and Master became disjoined, and as Dr. Anderson was absent from the deliberations of the Grand Lodge of England between June 1724 and June, 1731, it is perhaps a fair inference that he was not concerned in the alteration.

* *e.g.*, Sloano M.S. 3329, has :—"To Discourse a Mason in France, Spaine or Turkey. the signe is to kneel Down on his left knee and hold up his right hand to the sunn, and the out landish Broth^r will presently take him up but [adds the compiler, who is evidently a bit of a wag], believe me if they go on their knees on that accot they may remain there." *Per contra*, however, and as illustrating the position maintained in the text, the same MS. states that by virtue of a particular sign, a Mason must come down if required to do so from the top of a steeple. This, though also ridiculous, and doubtless equally devoid of real meaning, nevertheless lends colour to the statement of Dr. Plot, that something precisely similar was included among the traditional observances of the Staffordshire Masons in 1686.—See *A.Q.C.*, i., 69.

To sum up. It is, I think, abundantly clear that the Masonic body had its first origin in the trades-unions of Mediæval operatives, but we must now ask ourselves, whether there was a Survival of their Symbolism,—or indeed if they possessed any at all—when Ancient Masonry put on its Modern attire, and became as it has since continued to be, a purely speculative science.

In other words, did the Freemasons of 1717, and later, retain, many forms, ceremonies, words, and symbols, which they derived from their direct ancestors, the Working Masons.

Before, however, adducing the strongest evidence I possess, in favour of the antiquity of our existing Masonic Symbolism, and which I have purposely kept back until the last moment, let me briefly state a counter-theory that has its supporters.

It is, that some men, being learned in astrology, alchemy, and cabalistic lore generally, were also Freemasons, and took advantage of this circumstance to indoctrinate their colleagues with their own fantastic belief, and so, under the cloak, and by means of the organization of Fræmasonry, to preserve tenets which might otherwise have fallen into complete oblivion.

According to Vaughan, "Mysticism has no Genealogy. The same round of notions, occurring to minds of similar make, under similar circumstances, is common to mystics in ancient India and in modern Christendom."* The same writer observes:—"As the revival of letters spread over Europe, the taste for antiquity and natural science began to claim its share in the freedom won for theology; the pretensions of the Cabbala, of Hermes, of Neo-Platonist Theurgy became identified with the cause of progress."†

I shall pass lightly over a subject which has lain out of my course of study, and is perhaps, beyond my sphere of comprehension. But I believe it may be assumed, that according to the theory of which I am trying to give you an outline, the mystical knowledge or symbolism of the Craft is supposed to have been introduced into the Lodges by the Hermetical philosophers, or Rosicrucian adepts, whose studies appear to have embraced the same objects, and between whom therefore the only difference seems to have been one of title, the former appellation being the earlier of the two, but the latter (owing to the alleged existence of a *Society* of Rosicrucians, with which, however, the *other Rosicrucians* must not be confounded) ultimately becoming the more common term by which those votaries of the "Chymical Art," or "Sons of the Fire," were alluded to.

It has been maintained by some writers that the influence of Hermeticism upon Masonry made itself felt during the time of Elias Ashmole, while by others it is affirmed that the symbolism of our Society is of much later institution, and that it came to us after 1717, at the hands of the Rosicrucians.

There is also a third contention—to which I have previously referred—partaking of the other two, and it is that Hermetic symbolism had penetrated into Masonry, *before*, "but that the working-class of Masons in the Lodges had no knowledge of it," until *after*, the era of Grand Lodges.

With regard to these several theories, I shall first of all put the following case. Let us suppose that we find in an individual certain habits or idiosyncrasies, and that it is confidently asserted that he has inherited them from his grandfather. Further, let us imagine that with regard to his intermediate ancestor, no information whatever is forthcoming, and I think it represents fairly enough the stretch of faith that is required of us to yield an implicit assent to the dogma of Hermetic ancestry with which we are presented.

We should, in the one case, I think, endeavour to trace the *immediate paternity* of the individual whose habits or idiosyncrasies were the subject of consideration, and this is precisely what I shall ask you to assist me in doing in the other case.

Under the Grand Lodge of England, within the first decade of its existence, there was a ceremonial, or, to vary the expression, certain ritual and emblematical observances were wrought in the Lodges, and whether these were then new or old, is, shortly stated, the main issue for our determination.

If I notice the fact that the Hermeticists or Rosicrucians are not known to have practised themselves any mystic or symbolical ceremonies which they could have passed on to the Freemasons, it is merely that I may proceed with the observation, that what is incapable of proof is of course equally incapable of refutation.

But these alchemical philosophers did not pursue their curious studies in one country only, and why if they fraternized with, or in any way made use of, the Masons of Britain (or their organization), they should have as resolutely refrained from doing the same thing on the Continent, is a mystery of which the explanation is withheld from us.

* Hours with the Mystics, i., 60.

† *Ibid*, ii., 30.

Much weight has been attached to the undoubted fact that Elias Ashmole was both an Hermetical philosopher and a Freemason. Still, conjectures must not be allowed to take the place of evidence, and we may well ask for the requisite information that will enable us to consider the influence of Hermeticism as it appears in the general body of Masonry, and not as it was circumstanced in any individual member of the Craft.

Bro. Albert Pike tells us, in words which are so beautifully chosen, that I shall need no apology for reproducing them :—

“The Symbolism of Masonry is the Soul of Masonry. Every symbol of the Lodge is a religious teacher, the mute teacher also of morals and philosophy. It is in its ancient symbols and in the knowledge of its true meanings that the pre-eminence of Freemasonry over all other Orders consists. In other respects some of them may compete with it, rival it, perhaps even excel it ; but, by its symbolism, it will reign without a peer *when it learns again what its symbols mean*, and that each is the embodiment of some great, old, rare truth.”*

You will have in your immediate recollection the words to which I specially invited your attention :—“*When it learns again what its symbols mean.*” They proclaim a truth which is a cardinal feature of the history or hypothesis that I am presenting to you this evening.

It is, that the meaning of a great part of our Masonic Symbolism has been forgotten, and here I shall proceed to show you, why in my judgment there are grounds for believing that this partial obliteration of its import *must* have taken place before the era of Grand Lodges.

If this view be tenable, then we may put on one side the suggestion that “the legend of the Third Degree was introduced by the new comers into Masonry, who brought into it all that is really symbolic and philosophical in the Three Degrees.”†

It is unlikely—not to say impossible—that any men of intellectual attainments, who joined the Craft under the Grand Lodge of England during the first decade of its existence, would have introduced any Symbolism of which they did not understand the meaning, and I think it can be very easily shewn from the ceremonial of that period, that it must have been quite as obscure and unintelligible in many parts in those days as it is in our own.

But as a preliminary, let us hear what a Commentator on one of the printed catechisms wrote with regard to it at the time of its publication.

Dr. Anderson himself is said to have been the writer, though I deem this to be incorrect, but the piece was written by someone possessing great ability, and was reprinted in the Book of Constitutions, 1738. It was styled “A Defence of Masonry,” and the design of the 3rd chapter was to remove the general impression produced by the publication of *Masonry Dissected*, “that the principles and the whole frame of Free-Masonry was so very weak and ridiculous, that it reflected upon Men of the least Understanding to be concerned in it.” In proof of which, it was alleged that the “Dissection” discovered “nothing but an unintelligible Heap of Stuff and Jargon, without Common Sense or Connection.”

Upon this, the learned and ingenious author of the “Defence,” who professed it to be his object to make “a few impartial Remarks upon the *Dissection*, without contending for the Reputation of Masonry on the one hand, or reflecting upon the *Dissector* on the other,” observes :—

“I confess I am of another opinion . . . the system as taught in the regular Lodges, may have some redundancies or defects, occasioned by the indolence or ignorance of the old Members. And, indeed, considering through what obscurity and darkness the Mystery has been delivered down ; the many centuries it has Survived ; the many countries, and languages, and sects, and parties it has run thro, we are rather to wonder it ever arrived to the present Age without more Imperfections. In short—I am apt to think that Masonry, *as it is now explained* [I ask your attention to these words, which are in italics in the original], has in some circumstances declined from its original purity : it has run long in muddy streams, and as it were, underground ; but notwithstanding the great rust it may have contracted, there is, (if I judge right) much of the old Fabrick still remaining : the Foundation is still entire ; the essential Pillars of the Building may be seen through the Rubbish, though the Superstructure may be over run with Moss and Ivy, and the Stones by length of time disjointed.

And, therefore, as the *Busto* of an old Hero is of great value among the curious, though it has lost an Eye, the Nose, or the Right Hand, so *Masonry* with all its blemishes and

* *Official Bulletin (U.S.A.) Sup. Council, S.J., viii., app. 16.*

† *A.Q.C. ii., 43.*

misfortunes, instead of appearing ridiculous, ought (in my humble opinion) to be received with some Candour and esteem from a Veneration to its Antiquity."*

The passage I have just read to you lends no colour to the supposition that any new comer into Masonry could have remodelled the ancient ritual. Indeed, as you have seen, by the general public, "the principles and the whole frame of Free-Masonry was deemed so weak and ridiculous that it reflected upon men of the least understanding to be concerned in it."

Of this a further example is afforded by some inuendoes in the "Ode to the Grand Khaibar,"† 1726, which besides allusions to the "unintelligible Gabble," and "Solemn Fooleries," of the Freemasons, has the following:—

"With empty Names of Kings and Lords
The MYSTIC LODGE may sooth the Fancy,
Words without Meaning it affords,
And Signs without significancy."

But to pass into a higher sphere of criticism, we may infer from the "Defence of Masonry" having been reprinted with the Book of Constitutions, 1738, that in the opinion of the leading Masonic authorities, the ancient "Fabrick" (of Masonry) had sustained such ravages at the hands of time and neglect as to raise doubts as to *how much of it was still remaining.*"

The proper thing to do, however, is to examine the ritual for ourselves, and here, as time presses, I must ask those brethren who are unacquainted with its peculiar phrasology to at least so far yield me their confidence, as to believe in my statement that it abounds with archaisms, which are clearly survivals of more ancient forms of speech. I will also premise, that in choosing a title for this paper, I have been influenced by the consideration, that, while the Symbolism of Ancient Masonry may have embraced many things that were absent from its Ceremonial, still all we can learn of the former must be derived from our actual knowledge of the latter—a fragment it may be, of the symbolic teaching of more remote ages, but nevertheless all that we can rely upon with any approach to certainty, as affording a real clue to the lost secrets of the Society.

[A verbal exposition was then given of the early ritual and ceremonial under the Grand Lodge of England, together with typical illustrations of the lost meanings of some portions of the Symbolism of Masonry.]

That the Symbolism of Masonry existed before the era of Grand Lodges (1717) is, I think, a point upon which, if we reflect at all, there can be little or any variety of opinion. But if the minor contention, which has been laid before you, is established to your satisfaction, you will find, I think, that you are carried a very great way towards accepting the major one.

In other words, if the symbolism (or ceremonial) of Masonry is older than the year 1717, there is practically no limit whatever of age that can be assigned to it. *After* the formation of a Grand Lodge there was centralization. *Before* it there was none. Each Lodge then met by inherent right, and even if we go so far as to admit the possibility of new and strange practices being introduced with any one of them, there was no higher body by whose authority these innovations could have been imposed on the other Lodges. To put it in another way. If we once get beyond or behind the year 1717, *i.e.*, into the domain of Ancient Masonry, and again look back, the vista is perfectly illimitable, without a speck or shadow to break the continuity of view which is presented to us.

It is therefore very far from being an arbitrary hypothesis—that the Symbolism we possess has come down to us, in all its main features, from very early times, and that it originated during the splendour of Mediæval Operative Masonry, and not in its decline.

With regard then to the antiquity of all that is of primary importance in Masonic Symbolism, some remarks of a non-Masonic writer will fit in very well by way of conclusion. He tells us:—

"That in very ancient times much knowledge of all kinds was embodied in mystical figures and schemes, such as were deemed appropriate for its preservation. Also, that many of these figures and schemes are preserved in Masonry, though their meaning is no longer understood by the fraternity."‡

* *A Defence of Masonry*, 105, 106.

† *Q.C.A.* i., pt. ii., No. 5.

‡ Heckthorn, *Secret Societies*, I., 248.

A Discussion ensued, to which the following was

THE REPLY.

The various remarks on my lecture, and among them I include whatever criticisms from an outside source that have yet fallen in my way,* suggest at the outset of this reply, that two of our stock terms in the Lodge are capable of a more varied application than has hitherto been accorded to them. These are the phrases "Inner" and "Outer Circle," which though only used at present to distinguish the actual members of the Lodge, from the subscribers to its *Transactions*, may, as it seems to me, with perfect propriety, be employed in a double sense, the new one being, that by Inner Circle shall be understood those brethren by whom a paper is actually considered *in the Lodge*; and by Outer Circle, the full members and others who *read* the printed proceedings of our meetings, but take no part in the *oral* discussions. This idea I throw out because if the proposed amplification of our Lodge vocabulary be deemed permissible, it will convey in a nutshell, the distinction to be drawn between the extent to which the secrets of Masonry may be legitimately discussed within a close-tiled Lodge, or in the columns of the press, respectively. These prefatory observations may serve to explain why I pass somewhat lightly over points in my paper where I am charged with expressing myself either obscurely, or with ambiguity. In both contentions, however, which I submitted to the Lodge, at its last meeting, I was sustained by the whole voice of the Inner Circle (in the new sense of that expression), but while I shall do my best, I cannot hope in a written reply, to satisfy the doubts or perplexities of that larger (or Outer) Circle, who, on the 3rd January, were not actually present with us in the flesh.

Thus, I cannot very well indicate to Bro. Hughan on paper what I mean with regard to "the essentials of the degrees" (*i.e.*, the first Three), being the same both before and after, the so-called Revival of 1717. Neither can I pursue at any length, the distinction drawn by Bro. Pike, between a "Philosophically Symbolic" and a "Morally-Symbolic" Masonry—the one, he thinks, having existed before, and the other after, the era of Grand Lodges. Hence, I shall notice the points thus raised by these two brethren, in a single sentence, which, however, it will be my object to make as clear to them as possible. I am of opinion that the Masonic Secrets as existing at about the second decade of Modern Masonry, or, to speak with greater precision, during the Grand Mastership of Lord Kingston (1729), had their origin in a period of time far anterior to the great event of A.D. 1717. If this view be correct, the ceremonial of Masonry, which we know to have been Morally-Symbolic in 1729, was equally so before the era of Grand Lodges, and the existence of a Philosophically-Symbolic Masonry—at any time—becomes one of those shadowy speculations, to which, in the absence of further light, we can only assign a place in the vast realm of conjecture.

At the so-called "Revival" of A.D. 1717, the introduction of a new Symbolism would have been impossible, but it is contended, that to a more or less extent new ideas were ingrafted on the transmitted Symbolism. This there is no evidence to support. Indeed, quite the contrary. The earliest Masonic Symbolism we have any clear knowledge of is that practised in the English Lodges from about 1723 to 1729. Whether the ceremonial of those days is best described as Morally-Symbolic, or by any other name, is immaterial. Whatever it *was* at that epoch, it *had* been from a period of time *then* remote—as I shall venture to lay down with confidence, on the authority of the consensus of opinion arrived at by the members and others who were present at the last meeting of this Lodge. I therefore pass away from the lesser contention which pervaded my address of the 3rd January.

With the larger one it is not easy to deal in the short compass which is here allowed me, nor, indeed, does its full discussion fall within the scope of my paper.† A dozen papers at least would be required to do justice to it. Still a few words on the way in which the problem should be worked out, with some passing allusions to the subsidiary puzzles which yet await solution, may have their value as presenting a rough chart or map, that will guide the student into these bye-paths of Masonic history, from whose thorough exploration much benefit may be anticipated.

* *e.g.*, "A letter touching Masonic Symbolism"—8th Nov. 1889—from Bro. Albert Pike to the writer; and an article in the *Freemason's Chronicle*—7th Dec., 1889—entitled "Masonic Antiquity, Bro. Gould's Nowly Assumed Championship For."

† *Ante*, p. 30—note 3.

With regard to the derivations of Masonry, there are, briefly, three possibilities. It may have come down to us

- I. Through a strictly Masonic channel.
- II. Through the Rosicrucians.
- III. Through a variety of defunct societies, whose usages and customs have been appropriated, not inherited, by the Freemasons.

The first possibility has already been considered with some minuteness in the body of my paper, and the theory I then advanced will be fortified, or the reverse, by the degree of probability which, on a fair examination, can be reasonably attached to either of the remaining theories of Masonic origin.

II. THE ROSICRUCIANS.—In 1782, Christoph Friedrich Nicolai, a learned bookseller of Berlin, advanced a singular hypothesis, *viz.*, that English Masonry had its origin in the "New Atlantis" of Lord Bacon, and was the actual product of an Hermetical and Rosicrucian fraternity, of which Elias Ashmole and others were leading members. This fraternity sought to arrive at truth by the study of Alchemy and Astrology. It was established in 1646, at Warrington, and afterwards, in order to conceal their mysterious designs, the members were admitted into the Masons' Company of London, and took the name of "Free Masons."

Another German writer—Johann Gottlieb Buhle—attempted to prove, first of all in Latin (1803), and subsequently in his native language (1804), that the Freemasons were originally Rosicrucians, and derived their real origin from a secret fraternity of the latter, of which John Valentine Andrea (born 1586, died 1654) was the founder.

The theory of Professor Buhle is dead, and I am not going to raise its melancholy ghost, but the older speculation of Nicolai, may be said, in a modified form, to have its adherents even at this day.

It is well known that Ashmole was made a Freemason at Warrington in 1646, that he attended a Lodge held at the Hall of the Masons' Company, London, in 1682, and that his diary records his presence at the annual Astrologers' Feast

Upon these facts, Nicolai seems to have erected his hypothesis, in which as a cardinal feature we find that Elias Ashmole is made to figure as the connecting link between the Freemasons and the votaries of Alchemy and Astrology. Yet there is not only a total absence of proof to warrant our belief that the Symbolism of the Hermetic Art was imported by Ashmole into Masonry, but it may also be affirmed that to do so would be to violate every canon of probability.

In the first place it would seem, that even if possessed of the will to benefit Masonry at the expense of Hermeticism, he apparently lacked the necessary ability to carry his purpose into effect. Ashmole, according to the best authorities, "was never an Adept, and began to write when he was but a disciple." But let us judge him out of his own mouth. His diary records under the 13th of May, 1652:—"My father Backhouse lying sick in Fleet Street, over against St. Dunstan's Church; and not knowing whether he should live or die, about one of the clock, told me, *in syllables* [*italics mine*] the true matter of the Philosopher's Stone, which he bequeathed to me as a legacy."

Upon the foregoing it has been remarked:—"By this we learn that a miserable wretch knew the art of *making gold*, yet always lived a beggar; and that Ashmole really imagined he was in possession of the syllables of a secret."*

The belief, however, in an Ashmolean influence having been exercised upon Freemasonry demands our attention, notwithstanding that one scarce knows how to be serious in the confutation of an absurdity that shews itself at the first sight. It is the main prop of the theory that the Symbolism of Masonry is of late Rosicrucian (or Hermetic) origin, and its recent revival I can only attempt to explain by the following. It is related that after the decay of Paganism, a certain Roman on being rebuked for making a profound obeisance before the statue of Jupiter, excused himself by advancing the conjecture—"that perhaps his time might come round again." A somewhat similar idea is conveyed by the old English proverb:—

"He that falls to-day, may be up again to-morrow."

* Disraeli; *Curiosities of Literature*, i., 286.

As a matter of fact, at the time Ashmole flourished, the study of the Hermetic Art had fallen into great disrepute, and in my judgment we must go far higher for any possible trace of its influence upon Freemasonry.*

The study of Alchemy, of which Hermes Trismegistus is supposed to have been the founder, was at first limited to the East†, and the search for the Philosopher's Stone, after a dormancy (or unrecorded period) of several centuries, was again taken up in the eighth century by the Arabians, who in the tenth, pursued it with vigour in Spain, whence it spread or was re-extended throughout the rest of Europe. It therefore seems to me, that *if* Freemasonry is in any way indebted to Hermeticism for its Symbolism, the period in which the Arabian learning found its way into England, is the epoch wherein we must look for the occurrence.

Here, however, I invite attention to the remarks of our I.P.M. on my paper. Bro. Simpson cavils, and with good reason, at the too common assumption, that the Symbolism of our art *must* have been derived from the Rosicrucian or Hermetical Adepts. Of course it *may* have been, though at a more distant date than has been ascribed to the assimilation, but I am in full accord with our I.P.M., in the doubts he expresses with regard to the reality of such a derivation.

If we go back to the Ancient mysteries, we meet with dialogue, ritual, darkness, light, death, and reproduction. Many features of the Mysteries were preserved until a comparatively late era, and to me at least it seems a not unreasonable conjecture, that some of them may have survived without break of continuity, and are now a part of Masonry.

Other ancient sources of possible origin might be cited. "The language of signs," as observed by a recent writer, "is probably older than that of sounds, and among the ancient Hebrews it was still a living language, to a much greater extent than it is among ourselves."‡ Their prophets presented their own bodies in strange and humiliating ways as signs to the people. Isaiah stripped himself naked, and showed himself in the streets of Jerusalem.

Space forbids my more than glancing at the fact, that among all, or nearly all religions, there is a remarkable affinity with respect to the Incommunicable name of God, also that according to some authorities it was the great secret of the Mysteries.§

III. Societies now defunct, whose usages and customs may have been appropriated by the Freemasons.

This is what Bro. Simpson in a general reply to the discussion on his "Worship of Death," has very happily termed "the old clothes theory." Its principal supporter was the late Dr. Armstrong, Bishop of Graham's Town, South Africa, who contended that "the Freemasons possess the relics and cast off clothes of some deceased fraternity," and in a strain of lively banter, compared their doings with those of an imaginary Hottentot, whom he pictured as being presented with the full-dress regimentals and equipments of the 10th Hussars, and proceeding to induct himself, without instruction, into the mystic and confusing habiliments.||

In dealing with this theory, I shall put the following case:—Let us suppose, 1—that in different parts of Great Britain there were to be found carefully preserved suits of clothes of an obsolete pattern and of very ancient manufacture; 2—that they were all alike, without counterparts elsewhere and varied only from each other in the quality of the material; and 3—that they were either owned by, or had been derived from, in each case, persons bearing the same family name. We should conclude, I think, that whatever story or tradition was attached to those garments, must be looked for in the history of the family into whose custody, either nearly or remotely, they could be traced.

* Ashmole is, after all, only one among a crowd of persons (and not all of them *brethren*) who, living in the 17th and 18th centuries, have been elevated into Masonic heroes by writers of the Craft. Thus, Wren was never Grand Master, and there is no proof that he was a Mason at all. Desaguliers' great Masonic reputation crumbles wholly away on a close examination. Martin Clare never revised the Ritual. Ramsay did not invent a single one of the numerous Rites that have been fastened on him. The young Pretender, (Charles Edward) was *not* a Freemason. Lastly (though the list could be extended) Dunkerley's labours as a Ritual-monger, are as imaginary as those of Martin Clare.

† "The Alchemists pretended to derive their science from Shem, or Chem, the son of Noah, and that thence came the name of *Alchemy* and *Chemistry*. All writers upon Alchemy triumphantly cite the story of the golden calf in the 32nd chapter of Exodus, to prove that Moses was an adept, and could make or unmake gold at his pleasure."—Baring Gould, *The Philosopher's Stone*, *Genl. Mag.*, Jan. 1890.

‡ Turner, *Hist. of the Quakers*, 104.

§ See "A contribution to the History of the lost Word."—Fort, *Early His. and Antiq. of F.*, 449, et seqq: and Mackey, *Encycl. of F. s.v.*, Adonai, Jehovah, Name.

|| *A.Q.C.*, ii., 44-48.

In the same way, I believe that the Manuscript Constitutions, the "old clothes" of my apologue—which are of great antiquity, bear a close resemblance to one another, and were used by the Masons' trade only—afford conclusive evidence that the story or tradition of Masonry must be looked for in the history of our own Craft. Also, I believe, though freely admitting that the inclination of my opinion rests upon no definite proof, that the class of persons who, in the 14th century, *or earlier*, constructed the Craft legend, were also capable of understanding, and did understand, to a greater extent than ourselves, the meaning of a great part of the Symbolism which has descended from Ancient to Modern Masonry.

I shall next touch upon those points in my paper which open up some of the greatest puzzles in Masonic history. One of these, and perhaps the most insoluble, is the Harleian MS., 1942, which fairly bristles with difficulties of every kind. A second is the Antiquity MS.; a third, the use of Scottish operative terms in the English Constitutions (1723) and Ritual; and a fourth, Old Regulation XIII, (1723) ordaining that the degree of Fellow Craft (or Master) should be conferred in the Grand Lodge only.* Each of these might well form the subject of a separate study, and until they are better understood a great part of the later history of the Ancient, and of the earlier history of Modern Masonry, will continue to lie very much in the dark. As a fifth puzzle, I might instance Mason's Marks, but as the J.W. will shortly read a paper on that subject, there can be no doubt that under his able treatment of it, many of our difficulties will disappear, and that, at all events, our ignorance with regard to so interesting a branch of our antiquities will be less profound.

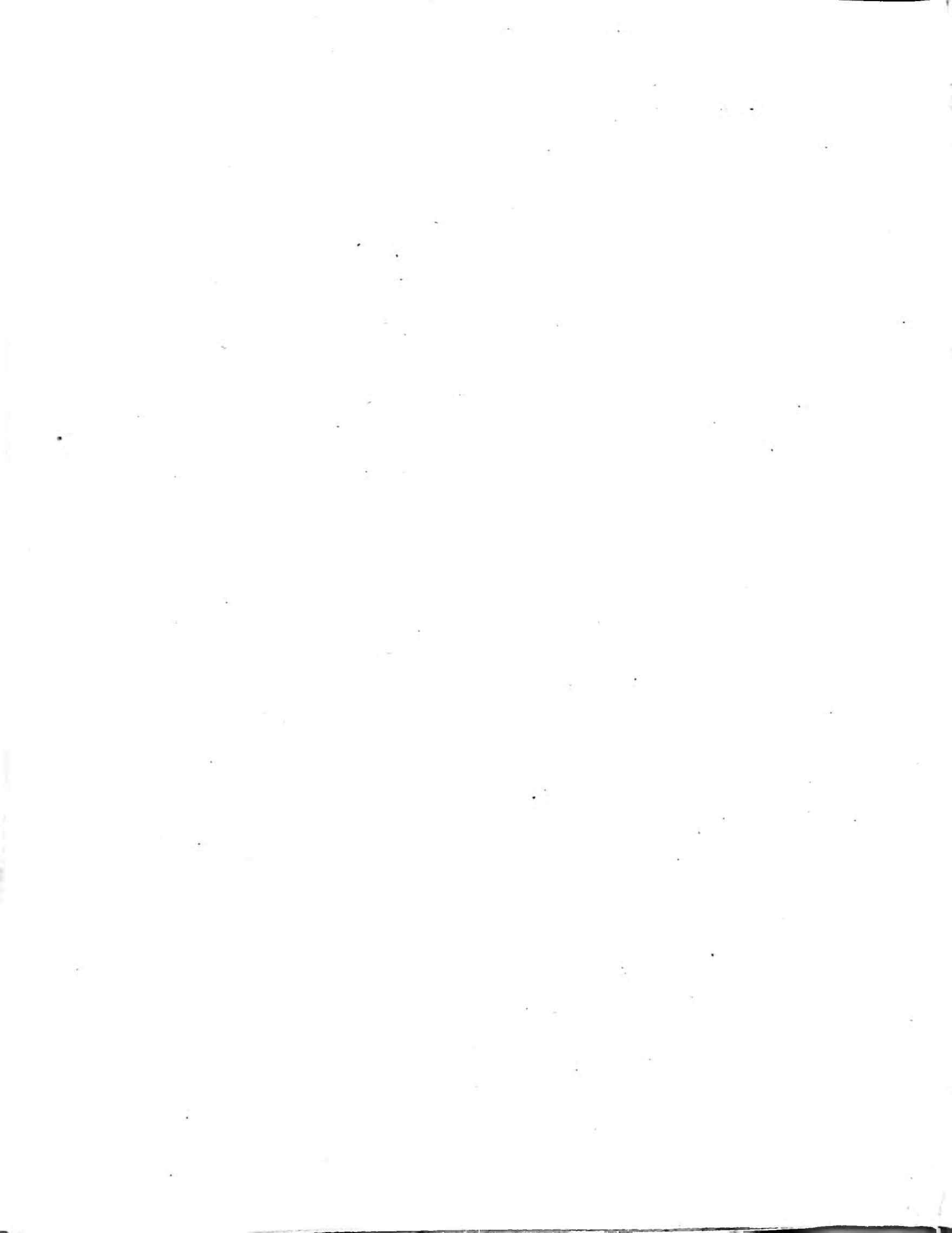
In conclusion, I cannot urge too strongly that the study of our written traditions and of our Symbolism should be proceeded with conjointly. To depend upon either alone—and there is rather a disposition to exalt the symbolical at the expense of the written traditions of Freemasonry—is like the case of a man using only one leg, though in the possession of two. Symbolism, as Bro. Albert Pike tells us so truly, is the *Soul* of Masonry. I am unable to complete the metaphor by saying of what the *body* consists, but the garments in which it is clad, and has come down to us from very remote times, are our Manuscript Constitutions, the connecting links—in a corporeal sense—between Ancient and Modern Freemasonry.

* The legislation of this period had reference only to the Masons of London and Westminster. This it is desirable to recollect, as otherwise so arbitrary an enactment would have virtually blotted out a portion of the ancient teaching from the Masonry of the country Lodges.

VII.

GRAND LODGE OF THE "SCHISMATICS"
OR "ANCIENTS."

[Ars Quatuor Coronatorum, 1893.]



GRAND LODGE OF THE "SCHISMATICS" OR "ANCIENTS."

[A. Q. C., 1893.]

The latest of the Masonic Celebrities who have figured in my portrait gallery, is DR. THOMAS MANNINGHAM,* and I am now requested by the Editor of our *Transactions* to consider whether in any material respect, the general fidelity of that sketch has been either shaken or otherwise impaired by the criticism it has experienced.

The remarks to which my attention has been specially invited by Bro. Speth are from the pens of Bros. Lane and Whympier, and will be found in the last part or number of *Ars*, and the current one respectively.†

Before, however, commencing to deal with them, let me express the very great pleasure it has afforded me, that an article written by myself, should have been the means of drawing from their moorings, into the front of the fighting line, two "first-raters," carrying such heavy metal, as the writers I have last referred to.

Of Bro. John Lane—our premier Masonic statistician—it may be said, that he has hitherto devoted himself rather too exclusively to a single department of research, and though calculated to shine in a large number, remains content to hold, against all comers, the field he has so completely made his own—by excelling everyone of us who has entered it before him.

Bro. Whympier, of late years, has taken upon himself the *role* of a Missionary of the Craft *in partibus infidelium*, and those only whose memories carry them back to what the periodical literature of Masonry in our Indian Empire *was*, before this brother applied himself to refine and elevate it, can have any idea whatever of the extent to which his own personal writings have contributed to establish the high standard of Masonic knowledge, that now admittedly exists there.

It is a very excellent thing for the members of this Lodge to have two such untiring students—I cannot say quite, in their midst, but in their ranks, and my own appreciation of their labours, which—through the medium of a quotation—will be next given, I shall ask them to regard or accept, as a set-off or counterpoise, to the friendly feeling towards myself which pervades their several articles.

The late Ernest Renan tells us :—"Had I been born to be the head of a School, I should have had a singular crotchet. I should have loved only those of my disciples that might happen to detach themselves from me."

Without, indeed, going the extreme length to which the great Semitic scholar, whose recent death may fairly be viewed as a world-wide calamity, has allowed himself to be carried, there is much in his frank avowal with which I am wholly in accord.

Thus, leaving out the notion of being the head of a School—who, with us is always the Master of the Quatuor Coronati Lodge for the time being—and merely speaking in my individual capacity as a student, the great respect and admiration with which I regard so much of the work performed by the I.P.M. and Secretary of this Lodge, represent in point of fact, the tribute I involuntarily yield to the force of character they exhibit in having at all times the courage of their opinions.

I am therefore very greatly obliged to Bros. Lane and Whympier for bringing me to book on any point where they think I have gone astray,

All keys hang not in one girdle.

Nor, do I consider it even remotely possible that any single writer who ventures to touch on the vexed question of the Great Schism in English Masonry, could fully dissipate the obscurity with which it is surrounded.

But the two interpellations have also a special value of their own that should not be overlooked—they indicate to our vast Circle that,

The Priests of Masonic Science have their Inquisition.

* A.Q.C., v. 93.

† *Ibid*, v. 166, vi. 17.

The last word, however, must be understood in a good sense, as meaning in the phraseology of Ancient Masonry, that a brother against whom anything is alleged, should "stand to the award of his fellows," and in that of its modern equivalent, that any writer of the Craft whose statements are assailed, must submit to be put (not to the rack, but) to the proof.

In my Memoir of Dr. Manningham, there were two positions laid down, against the validity of which it has been contended, first, that the governing body of the Schismatic Grand Lodge of England was already a "Grand Lodge," when only styled by me a "Grand Committee"; and secondly that I have attached undue weight to certain statements in an anonymous and undated work,* instead of following such safe guides as John Noorthouck† and William Preston.‡

With regard to the points which are here raised, let me begin by expressing the hope that I shall not be found impervious to just criticism, nor tardy in acknowledging any errors into which I may have fallen.

A pleasing writer observes, and the advice he tenders is as happily conceived as it is forcibly expressed:—"Speak what you think to-day in words as hard as cannon-balls, and to-morrow speak what to-morrow speaks, in hard words again; though it contradicts everything you have said to-day."§

Nearly ten years have elapsed, since I described, to the best of my ability, the rise and progress of the "Schismatics" or "Ancients,"|| and the *gravamen* of the offence which is laid at my door by Bro. Lane, I take to be, that in the last literary portrait executed by me for these *Transactions*, I have again touched on the subject of the Great Schism, but without noticing in any way a material fact having relation thereto, which was published by Bro. Lane himself, after the appearance in print of the fourth half volume of my *History*.¶

To this charge I plead guilty, though the confession is untinged with remorse, since it would have been quite impossible for me to interweave with a biography of Dr. Manningham, all the interesting *excerpts* from old records that are now furnished by Bro. Lane,** and by the aid of which every reader of *Ars* will be enabled to form an independent judgment in regard to the points that have been raised for discussion.

The main question, indeed, appears to me, one of a purely "academical" character, though I must not be supposed as thereby wishing to convey that it is unworthy of being ventilated in these columns. That there was a governing body of so-called "Ancients" before 1753, is free from doubt; but not entirely so, I venture to think, the term or title by which it would be most accurately described.

In Johnson's *Dictionary*, the 7th meaning of the word "Commission" reads:—"The state of that which is entrusted to a number of joint officers; as, *the broad seal was put into commission.*" Very much the same thing might be alleged with respect to the *functions of a Grand Master*, under the "Ancients," at the period of our inquiry, and it may be submitted for consideration whether any better title than "Grand Committee" would be applicable to the *joint officers* unto whom the performance of such "functions" was allotted?

Bro. Lane says, "The inference that there could be no Grand Lodge without a Grand Master will not, in my opinion, commend itself to the Fraternity at large." But leaving wholly out of sight the not unimportant fact of there being already in existence a Grand Lodge of England, when the new organisation had its beginning, let the question be put whether at any time since the Old System of Masonry was succeeded by the New, or in other words from 1717 downwards, would a body styling itself a "Grand Lodge" but which had never possessed a Grand Master, have been accorded recognition by any duly constituted Masonic authority?

But as our Bro. Lane, with his usual candour, has printed all the evidence bearing on the point under discussion, any slip I may have made in omitting to mention the discovery of "Morgan's Register," has been more than remedied by the publication of its contents at far greater length than would have been possible in connection with my own article, unless indeed, I could have induced our worthy Editor to allow that already rather lengthy contribution to assume still more formidable proportions, by the addition of an appendix.

Passing from the criticism of Bro. Lane to that of Bro. Whympier, I find it to be no longer an "affair of outposts," as the latter has evidently taken up positions with a view to bringing on a "general engagement." He offers battle "all along the line."

* *The Complete Free-mason; or, Multa Paucis for Lovers of Secrets.*

† *Constitutions*, 1784.

‡ *Illustrations of Masonry.* § Emerson, *Essay on Self Reliance.* || *Hist. of F.* ii., 2nd half-volume.

¶ *Freemason*, Oct. 18th, 1885; Lane, *Masonic Register*, preface xii.

** *A.Q.C.*, v. 166.

But before coming to close quarters with my genial antagonist, and by way of limiting in some degree the area over which our contention may extend, let me lay down what I believe will not be demurred to by Bro. Whympier, *viz.*, that all the statements with regard to the origin (or causes) of the Great Schism in English Masonry, by writers of the last century, are of a somewhat fanciful character; and there is an insufficiency of positive evidence either to confirm or to disprove them.

If this be conceded, then the parties in the controversy which is being proceeded with—to wit, our Bro. Whympier, the writer of this article, and possibly even Bro. Lane himself, may be likened to

“*Teague’s cocks, that fought one another, though all were on the same side.*”

It is impossible to lay down any fixed rule with respect to the extent it is permissible to attempt an explanation of that which, in our present state of knowledge, is hopelessly obscure. But it is quite evident that whenever such an attempt is made, it must necessarily follow, in cases where “the lighthouses and landmarks of facts have been swept away,” that any argument becomes maintainable.

As it has been well expressed,—“What is incapable of proof is also incapable of refutation; a boundary line that cannot be defined cannot be disputed.” Everyone who makes a careful study of our English Masonic history at the period we are now upon, may and probably will, strike out a path of his own, and in all such cases, whether the distance traversed be a long or a short one, unless I am greatly mistaken, a wise saying that was garnered by George Herbert in his famous collection, will be found to apply,

“*Every path hath a puddle.*”

When facts fail us, we are thrown back upon conjecture, and with one and all of the guesses we make at the truth—regarding the matter now in hand—there are difficulties in the way, which cannot be wholly removed, though they may be sensibly lessened by resorting to a system of comparison. Thus, for example, if there are, as I willingly admit to be the case, certain difficulties about the belief I have expressed with respect to the early history of the Schismatics or Ancients, let us see, whether the difficulties the other way, by which is meant the alternative conjecture propounded by Bro. Whympier, are not greater?

This will enable me to grapple with him more closely, for though in relation to matters of ascertained fact, we are, I thoroughly believe, “fighting on the same side,” nevertheless in the region of theory, where a totally different opinion is not only allowable but praiseworthy, something in the nature of a private war—at all events of words—may conveniently be set up between us.

Bro. Whympier has advanced with vigour to the Attack, and I shall conjure up a similar spirit of resolution, to assist me in the Defence. If we are both pronounced to be of a dogmatical kind, it will not matter, at least to ourselves, since it is the way of the positive to seek the opposing positive as its natural food and exercise, because, to use the American orator’s vivid image,—it gives one such a tremendous wrench to kick out hard at nothing?*

Mr. Whympier’s chief points are, that instead of Lord Byron having neglected the duties of his high station, the probability is rather the other way; also, that the long footnote of fifty lines which straggles over three pages of Noorthouck’s Constitutions,† together with the writings of William Preston,‡ virtually supersede, as being of superior authority, the *anonymous* statement by the author of *Multa Paucis*.

Now to begin with, the foot-note in the Constitutions of 1784, was copied from the *Freemasons’ Calendar* of 1783; but the subject-matter appeared in the earlier *Calendar* of 1776, while that publication was brought out by the Stationer’s Company, and before it had passed into the hands of Grand Lodge. The disputes of the year 1739 were included among the “Remarkable Occurrences in Masonry,” compiled by William Preston, who seems, moreover, to have issued a pamphlet, reflecting on the Schismatics, in 1775. A still earlier notice of his *quondam* co-sectaries, occurs in the second edition of the *Illustrations of Masonry*, which also appeared in that year. It is given as a *note* to the narrative of Lord Raymond’s administration, and runs:—

“Several persons, disgusted at some of the proceedings of the Grand Lodge *at this time*, renounced their allegiance to the Grand Master, and in opposition to the original laws of the Society, and their solemnities, held meetings, made Masons, and falsely assumed the appellation of a Lodge, even presumed to constitute lodges. The regular Masons, finding it

* Boyes *Lacon in Council*, viii.

† Edit. 1784, by John Noorthouck, 239-41.

‡ *Illustrations in Masonry* (various editions) *passim*.

necessary to check their progress, adopted some new measures. Piqued by this proceeding, they endeavoured to propagate an opinion, that the ancient practices of the Society were retained by them, and totally abolished by the regular Lodges, on whom they conferred the appellation of *Modern Masons*. By this artifice they continued to impose on the public, and introduced several gentlemen into their assemblies; but of late years, the fallacy being detected, they have not been so successful."

In the *Freemasons' Calendar* of 1776, however, the disturbances, which we are told above had their origin in 1739, are traced back to the time of Lord Loudon, whose appointment of Grand Officers in 1736, Preston now informs us, gave offence to a few individuals, who withdrew from the Society during the presidency of the Earl of Darnley, but in that of Lord Raymond "assembled in the character of Masons, and without any power or authority from the Grand Master, initiated several persons into the order for small and unworthy considerations."

Ultimately the story assumed the stereotyped form in which we now possess it. Successive editions of the *Illustrations of Masonry*, published in 1781, 1788, 1792, and later, inform us that in the time of the Marquis of Carnarvon (afterwards Duke of Chandos), some discontented brethren, taking advantage of the breach between the Grand Lodges of London and York, assumed, without authority, the character of York Masons; that the measures adopted to check them seemed to authorise an omission of, and a variation in, the ancient ceremonies; that the seceders immediately announced independency, and assumed the appellations of *Ancient Masons*, also they propagated an opinion that the ancient tenets and practice of Masonry were preserved by them; and that the regular lodges, being composed of *modern masons*, had adopted *new* plans, and were not to be considered as acting under the *old* establishment.*

It will be seen, therefore, that the whole case, as presented by Bro. Whympier, rests upon the unsupported and somewhat discrepant testimony of William Preston—with regard to which I shall first of all cite an axiom laid down by Horace Walpole, to be found in a department of literature—his published letters—wherein he is admitted to be without a rival in our language. Writing in 1784, he observes:—"The times immediately preceding their own are what all men are least acquainted with. Such times are too near us to be classical; they are too far off to be familiar."†

William Preston, who was born at Edinburgh in 1742, came to London in 1760, and was Initiated in a Schismatic (or so-called "Ancient") Lodge, at that time working under dispensation at the White Hart, Strand—but shortly afterwards No. 111 on the roll—in 1763, some months before he had completed his twenty-first year. In November, 1764 the members of No. 111 obtained a "Constitution" from the older or legitimate Grand Lodge of England, and became the Caledonian Lodge, No. 325, now No. 134.

After a comparatively short interval—when he was in his thirtieth year—Preston delivered an oration, subsequently printed in the first edition of his *Illustrations of Masonry*, which appeared in 1772.

From about this date he divided with Laurence Dermott, the distinction of being the best informed mason of that time. The one (Preston), a journeyman printer, who beginning as an *Ancient* had ended by becoming a *Modern* (both the words italicised being used in their popular, and by no means in their actual signification); while the other (Dermott), a journeyman painter, had shifted *his* allegiance in precisely a contrary direction.

Here a passage occurs to my mind, in the writings of a great though but too often a sophistical writer, the application of which to the subject in hand will be considered after the quotation has been given.

"To write the history of a religion," says Renan, "one ought first to have believed in it (without which it would not be possible to understand by what means it fascinated and satisfied the conscience of man); and then one should have ceased to believe it in an unqualified manner, for absolute faith is incompatible with sincere history."

Now I have no thought of comparing Masonry with religion, any further, indeed, than to make the passing remark, that what is commonly spoken of as the odium theologicum will have as real an existence—though the terms used to describe it may be different—when there are Masonic as when there are religious Schisms.

Without, therefore, straining the analogy, it would appear, under the conditions laid down by Renan, that the only writers of the Craft, really qualified to figure as its historians, at the period of, and in connection with the events under consideration, were Laurence

*See further, *Hist. of F.*, ii., 393, 397, 424.

† *Letters to Sir H. Mann*, i., 181.

Dermott and William Preston—though subject to the proviso, that these champions were only to be believed in the character of apostates, and to be utterly discredited with regard to what they had finally adhered to as the true faith!

Thus we should have Dermott as the great authority in the early proceedings of the *Regular*, and Preston in those of the *Irregular*, Grand Lodges of England—yet, as I shall confidently submit, with quite as little reason in the one case as the other.

The odious terms *Modern and Ancient*, coined by the former worthy to distinguish the *earlier* from the *later* system of Masonry to which he had adhered respectively, have now passed out of use, and only exist in the memory of our antiquaries. But they present in a nutshell, the distortion of truth—not to call it by any other name—that was characteristic of their inventor whenever he took pen in hand—which was pretty often—to explain that the Masons who acted with himself were walking in the only true path, from which their rivals, whom, though of far older date, he contemptuously styled the “Moderns,” had lamentably strayed.

The furious invective of the “journeyman painter,” which is conspicuous throughout his *Ahiman Rezon*, it is true, does not appear, or if at all, only very slightly disfigures a passage or two, in the *Illustrations* of the “journeyman printer.” But to whatever extent either of the two men becomes polemical, his writings must be viewed with distrust. I might, indeed, put it more strongly, though it will be best perhaps to steer a middle course, which can be done by laying down with confidence, that in each case of the kind, the judgment of the reader should be held in suspense, pending the production of *evidence*, that may turn the scale in one way or the other.

Of William Preston, it may be said, without fear of contradiction, that (to put it mildly) in all matters of a controversial nature, he laboured under a constitutional incapacity for exactitude of statement.

As a convincing example, let me cite a passage in the long foot-note copied by John Noorthouck, from a previous deliverance of the author of the *Illustrations of Masonry*:—“At this time [1739] no private lodge had the power of passing or raising masons; nor could any brother be advanced to either of these degrees but in the Grand Lodge, with unanimous consent and approbation of all the brethren in communication assembled.”*

This extract shows clearly enough, that the writer who is responsible for it, *was then in the infancy of his Masonic knowledge*, and will suggest, very forcibly, that *in the absence of corroboration*, the other statements in the same foot-note should be received with equal incredulity.

I shall next submit, what was substantially advanced many years ago by Dr. Kloss, *viz.*, that between the administration of Lord Raymond in 1739, and that of Lord Byron in 1747, nothing occurred—of which any evidence is known to exist—that will justify a presumption of there having been an organised rebellion against the authority of the Grand Lodge.

The Schismatics, or so-called “Ancient Masons,” came later, as Kloss affirms.

Bro. Whymper lays great stress on the number of lodges erased during the four or five years immediately preceding the administration of Lord Byron, and observes:—“A Schism was thus evidently in full swing long before Lord Byron assumed office in 1747.” With regard, however, to this conjecture—for it is nothing more—there is not only, as before remarked, an entire absence of evidence, that will warrant any such inference, but the silence of the official records, to pass over other channels of information, will be conclusive to more minds than my own, that no Schism could have been in operation, without at least some traces of its existence having been preserved in the Archives of Grand Lodge.

Of the career of William, 5th Lord Byron, I have been able to glean very few particulars. He was born November 5th, 1722, “took early to the sea-service, and in 1738 was appointed Lieutenant of H.M.S. the *Falkland*.” Married, March 28th, 1747, Elizabeth, “daughter and heir of Charles Shaw, of Besthorp Hall, in the county of Norfolk, by whom he had issue, 1st, William, born June 7th, 1748, who died in the May following; 2nd, William, born October 27th, 1749, who died June 22nd, 1776.” Also two daughters, Henrietta Diana, born 1751, died 1760; and Caroline, born 1755.

On December 5th, 1763, Lord Byron “was declared Master of His Majesty’s Stag-hounds,” which seems to dispose of a suggestion thrown out by Kloss that he may have been a Jacobite. On January 26th, 1765, he killed Mr. Chaworth (either fairly or unfairly) in a duel, and died May 19th, 1798.

* *Ante*, 19.

The *Gentleman's Magazine* (1798) in a short obituary notice, says of him,—“ On some family difference with his son, since dead, we have to regret that his Lordship completely dismantled his noble mansion at Newsted and sold the family pictures and timber.”*

It will be seen, that except so far as the birth of three children during his Grand Mastership, may point in the direction of Lord Byron having been in England between the date of his taking up and laying down that office, I have been unable to throw any new light on the circumstances of his career during the period referred to.

Lastly, then, let us consider, whether what Bro. Whymper calls, with propriety, the *Multa Paucis* theory, has or has not, to use his own words, “ an atom of bottom in it ”?

To save time and economise space, I shall next ask the reader who has followed me thus far, to kindly refer to the extract from the above work, given by me in my “ Manningham ” article, † also to some previous remarks on the same which will be found as below cited. ‡

The authorship of *Multa Paucis* has not been revealed, but let us hear what a very learned writer has to say with respect to testimony of this class :—“ An history may be true,” observes Dr. Watson, “ though it should not only be ascribed to a wrong author, but though the author of it should not be known : anonymous testimony does not destroy the reality of facts, whether natural or miraculous. Had Lord Clarendon published his ‘ History of the Rebellion,’ without prefixing his name to it : or had the History of Titus Livius come down to us, under the name of Valerius Flaccus, or Valerius Maximus : the facts mentioned in these histories would have been equally certain.”§

The same scholar and divine goes on to say,—“ Dodsley’s *Annual Register* is an anonymous book, we only know the name of its editor : the reviews are anonymous books : but do we, or will our posterity, esteem these books as of no authority ? On the contrary, we must give up all history, if we refuse to admit facts recorded by only one historian.”¶

Having now gone over the ground, or most of it, covered by the interesting paper of our Bro. Whymper, let me, before suggesting the final conclusions which seem to me deducible from the evidence, at the present time of writing, briefly restate the actual words in which I advanced my own conjecture with respect to the origin of the Schism in English Masonry :—“ It appears to me that the summary erasure of Lodges for non-attendance at the Quarterly Communications, and for not ‘ paying in their Charity,’ was one of the leading causes of the Secession, which I think must have taken place during the presidency of Lord Byron (1747-52).||

The point made by Bro. Whymper, that the bulk of the erasures thus referred to, took place *shortly before*, and not *during* the actual Grand Mastership of Lord Byron, instead of invalidating, appears to me to bear strongly in favour of the contention I upheld.

Throughout this period Secession or Rebellion may have been, so to speak, in the air, but any organised movement of the kind would be very slowly evolved, nor do I think it even remotely possible, that a confederacy of Masons aiming at independence, could have existed more than a year or two, at the very utmost, prior to 1751, the date which our Bro. Lane has done such excellent service in stamping indelibly on our memories. Were it otherwise, I shall venture to affirm that some traces of such earlier existence would have come down to us.

It will be seen that wholly apart from the passage in *Multa Paucis*, to which I shall next refer, the date of origin I assign to the “ Ancients,” falls within the period covered by Lord Byron’s presidency of the older and more orthodox Society.

According to the work last cited,** the Fraternity being neglected by Lord Byron, resolved to elect a new and more active Grand Master, but were deterred from so doing by the prudent advice of Dr. Manningham.

Here we have evidence of an organised rebellion against the authority of the Grand Lodge, or perhaps it will be best to say, against the want of authority exhibited by the Grand Master.

“ The breach was healed,” at least for a time, and the brother to whose credit this has been set down by the author of *Multa Paucis*, at the *very next* appointment of Grand Officers (1752), as we learn from the official records, was advanced at one bound from the office of Grand Steward to that of Deputy Grand Master.

* Collins, *Peerage of England*, edit. 1779, vii. 138 ; edit. 1812, vii. 111. *Genl. Mag.*, lxxviii., 448.

† *A.Q.C.*, v. 96. ‡ *Hist. of F.*, ii. 395, note 3.

§ *An Apology for the Bible, in a Series of Letters addressed to Thomas Paine, Esq.* By R. Watson, D.D., F.R.S., Bishop of Llandaff (1796), letter ii., 37. || *Ibid*, 93, 239. ¶ *A.Q.C.*, v., 103 ; *Hist. of F.*, ii., 398. ***The Complete Freemasons ; or, Multa Paucis for Lovers of Secrets* [1763-64] 105 ; see also *A.Q.C.*, v., 96 ; *Hist. of F.*, ii., 395 ; and *ante*, 17.

“ This points,”—as I have elsewhere argued at some length*—“ to his having rendered signal service to the Society, which would so far harmonise with the passage in *Mulla Paucis*, and be altogether in keeping with the character of the man.†

In conclusion, I beg to thank Bros. Lane and Whympier for the kindly references to myself in their several articles, and, quite as warmly, for pointing out any errors of statement into which they may have thought I had fallen. As we are quaintly but expressively reminded—

The wind in one's face makes one wise.

More last words. Further space having been allotted me, I turn to the Report on Foreign Correspondence for Colorado, 1892, by Past Grand Master Laurence N. Greenleaf of that State, where there appears :

“ One of the most important questions now before the Fraternity is : the Antiquity of Masonic Degrees. Under various headings in this Report we have had occasion to discuss this subject at considerable length more especially under Iowa and Utah. Under the latter we have given the opinion of Bro. R. F. Gould in connection with the discovery of the letters of Dr. Thomas Manningham, D.G. Master of England, 1752-56, and also extracts from these very important letters. Heretofore Bro. Gould himself has most strenuously maintained that Old Regulation XIII referred to two degrees only : ‘ Apprentices and Masters or Fellow Crafts ’ [*italics his*]. He has also written the following : ‘ The degrees of Ancient Masonry were two only and those of Modern Masonry were the same in number—at least until 1723.’

“ We are rejoiced to know that he has seen proper to reverse his opinion. Prominent writers have for years reiterated the same views, having little patience with those who had the temerity to differ with them. And yet not a particle of evidence was ever adduced to show *when* such addition occurred. Bro. Gould, as shown above, once intimated that it must have been subsequent to 1723. There is no mention in the records of the Grand Lodge of England of any such addition. Upon no other subject did our Masonic ancestors exhibit such anxiety as upon that of innovations and the maintenance of the old customs and usages of the Fraternity. To have added a third degree in our system, at any time since 1723, would have created sufficient stir to have left its impress upon the records of the Grand Lodge of England, as well as in contemporary Masonic writings. The very integrity of the Masonic system would thereby have been imperilled ; for, once admit the right of the governing body of the Craft to add *one degree* and others would necessarily follow.

“ The discovery of the Manningham letters has happily settled the controversy for the present, at least, and demonstrated the existence of the *three degrees* during the last quarter of the seventeenth century. Thus one more link has been added to the chain of evidence that Masonry was a perfect system *at the start.*”‡

So far, Bro. Greenleaf, whose quotations from my own writings would seem to imply that he has read an article of mine on the “ Antiquity of Masonic Degrees,” originally published in the *Freemasons' Chronicle* of August 2nd, 1890, and reprinted in the *Official Bulletin* § of the Supreme Council, S.J., of June, 1892. If, however, I am wrong in this supposition, the reference given will enable him, if so inclined, to peruse the article at leisure. Its value in my own eyes is enhanced—not from the fact of having written it, but because it appears among the latest “ cuttings ” preserved by Albert Pike, for insertion in that wonderful magazine, the organ of his Rite, the publication of which has now ceased,|| owing, it may reasonably be supposed, to the utter impossibility of finding anyone who could take up and continue the editorial labours, so long and so brilliantly conducted by the late Grand Commander.

The final words of the article on Degrees from which Bro. Greenleaf has quoted are as follows :—“ If Old Regulation XIII had been properly understood by the past generation of Masonic writers, we should have heard nothing whatever of a new ceremonial (or new Degrees) having been concocted between 1717 and 1723.”

Of the truth of this statement I still retain a lively conviction. *Two* degrees and not *three* are certainly alluded to in the above “ Regulations,” and the oftener this interpretation of the clause is disputed, the more does a saying of Sir Isaac Newton come home to me, “ A man must either resolve to put out nothing new, or become a slave to defend it.”

* *A. Q. C.*, v., 97 ; *Hist. of F.*, ii., 396.

† See the *Constitutions*, 1756, and later editions, under Ap. 3rd, 1753.

‡ *Proc. G. L. Colorado* (1892), 202. § vol. x., 765. || *Transactions*, S.C. (Oct., 1892), 43.

My contention was and is, that "the first three degrees, as we now have them, though communicated in two steps instead of three, were in existence before the era of Grand Lodges."*

Or, as expressed in my "Manningham" article,—“The secrets of the first three degrees were the same before the year 1717, as after it.”†

If the passage last referred to, is in any way ambiguous, I regret it, and would point out to Bro. Greenleaf, that the secrets of the first three degrees remain the same, though communicated, as I have myself witnessed in Scotland, in *one* step (or continuing ceremony) instead of *three*. The "old brother of ninety," cited by Dr. Manningham, may have been admitted in a somewhat similar manner—though to obviate any further misunderstanding, let me hasten to explain, that if he were not, the ceremonies through which he passed must have been the Apprentice part, on one occasion; and the Master's part, on another. The former comprised what are now called the *degrees* of E.A. and F.C.; and the latter, that of Master Mason.

My thanks are due to Past Grand Master Robbins of Illinois, and Grand Secretary Vaillant of the Netherlands, for their remarks on my "Manningham" article. The pamphlet of the latter describes in just terms the value of Bro. Hertzveld's discovery, and I shall ask him to kindly express to that worthy and venerable Brother, my sincere congratulations on the incredulity, with which the "Letters" were originally received, having been long since effectually stamped out.

*A.Q.C., v., 57. † *Ibid*, 112.

VIII.

THE VOICE OF THE SIGN.

[*Freemason*, Christmas No., 1887.]

THE VOICE OF THE SIGN.

[The *Freemason*, Dec. 21, 1887.]

In the "Natural Historie of Wiltshire," of which the last chapter was written in 1686, John Aubrey informs us that the Free-Masons were then "known to one another by certayn Signes and Watchwords," and Dr. Plot—writing in the same year—mentions their "Secret Signes" as being endowed with so singular an efficacy, that on the communication of anyone of them to a Fellow of the Society, he would be compelled to come at once "from what company or place soever he was in; nay, tho' from the top of a Steeple," to know the pleasure of, and to assist his summoner.* This whimsical conceit is thus pleasantly alluded to in a pamphlet of 1723:—

"When once a Man his *Arm* forth stretches,
It Masons round some distance fetches;
Altho' one be on *Paul's* Great Steeple,
Ho strait comes down amongst the People."†

In the year last named (1723) there appeared the first of the long series of Masonic Catechisms, or (so called) exposures of Masonry, which has come down to us. It is almost certain that there were earlier versions; but those of 1723 and 1724, styled respectively "A Mason's Examination" and "The Grand Mystery of Freemasons Discover'd," both of which are given at length in my History of our Society, will amply serve to illustrate my purpose, which is to establish that, in the popular estimation, at least, the gesture-language of the Freemasons constituted no mean portion of the learning of that Fraternity. Of this, indeed, many other proofs might be afforded, though I cannot pause to cite them, as I must pass on to my general subject, to which the preceding observations must be regarded as merely preliminary.

Krause was of opinion that the Masons derived their custom of having signs of recognition from the usage of the Monastic orders,‡ but, in truth, the existence of signs can be traced back to the remotest antiquity, or, in other words, so far into the past as there is either written history or evidence to guide us.

It is laid down by Warburton in his famous "Divine Legation," that "in the first ages of the world mutual converse was upheld by a mixed discourse of words and actions: hence came the Eastern phrase of THE VOICE OF THE SIGN,§ and use and custom, as in most other affairs in life, improving what had arisen out of necessity, into ornament, this practice subsisted long after the necessity was over; especially amongst the Eastern people, whose natural temperament inclined them to a mode of conversation, which so well exercised their vivacity, by motion; and so much gratified it, by a perpetual representation of material images." Of this, innumerable instances are afforded in the sacred writings, from which we learn that the prophets of old, by certain actions, instructed the people in the will of God, and conversed with them in signs.

As speech became more cultivated, this rude manner of speaking by action was smoothed and polished into an *apologue* or fable. We have a noble example of this form of instruction in the speech of Jotham to the men of Shechem, in which he upbraids their folly, and foretells their ruin, in choosing Abimelech for their King.|| This is not only the oldest, but, according to Warburton, the most beautiful *apologue* of antiquity, and the same writer then proceeds to show how nearly the *apologue* and *instruction by action* are related, which he does by instancing the account of Jeremiah's adventure with the Rechabites¶—an instruction partaking of the joint nature of *action* and *apologue*.

But it is not only in biblical history that we meet with the mode of *speaking by action*. "Profane antiquity," says Warburton, "is full of these examples; the early oracles in particular frequently employed it, as we learn from an old saying of Heraclitus—*That the King, whose oracle is at Delphi, neither speaks nor keeps silent, but reveals by SIGNS.*"

The Pythagoreans used certain conventional symbols, by which members of the Fraternity could recognise each other, even if they had never met before,** and that, in

* *Nat. Hist. Staffordshire*, chap. viii.

† *The Free Masons, an Hudibrastick Poem*, p. 17.

‡ *Kunsturkunden*, iv., 420.

§ *Exodus*, iv., 8.

|| *Judges*, ix., 7.

¶ Chap. xxxv.

** Smith, *Dict. Greek and Roman Biog.*, s.v.

all the Ancient Mysteries the initiated possessed secret signs of recognition is free from doubt. In the "Golden Ass" of Apuleius, Lucius, the hero of the story, is initiated into the Mysteries of Isis, but finds that it is also expected of him to be instructed in those "of the Great God, and Supreme Father of Gods, the invincible Osiris." In a dream he perceives one of the officiating priests, of whom he thus speaks—"He also walked gently with a limping step, the ankle bone of his left foot being a little bent, in order that he might afford me some *sign* by which I might know him."* In another work (*Apologia*), the author of the "Metamorphosis" says: "If any one happens to be present who has been initiated into the same rites as myself, *if he will give me the sign*, he shall then be at liberty to hear what it is that I keep with so much care." Plautus, too, alludes to this custom in one of his plays† when he says: "*Give me the sign*, if you are one of these votaries."

CHIRONOMIA, or the art of gesticulating, or talking with the hands and by gestures, with or without the assistance of the voice, was one of very great antiquity, and much practised by the Greeks and Romans, both on the stage and in the tribune, induced by their habit of addressing large assemblies in the open air, where it would have been impossible for the majority to comprehend what was said without the assistance of some conventional signs, which enabled the speaker to address himself to the eye as well as to the ear of his audience. These were chiefly made by certain positions of the hands and fingers, the meaning of which was universally recognised and familiar to all classes, and the practice itself reduced to a regular system, as it remains at the present time amongst the populace of Naples, who will carry on a long conversation between themselves by mere gesticulation, and without pronouncing a word. It is difficult to illustrate such a matter in an article like this; but the act is frequently represented on the Greek vases, and other works of ancient art, by signs so clearly expressed, and so similar in their character to those still employed at Naples, that a common lazzaroni, when shown one of these compositions, will at once explain the purport of the action, which a scholar with all his learning cannot divine.‡

"The *Pantomimi* of the Romans combined with the arts of gesture, music and dances of the most impressive character. Their silent language often drew tears by the pathetic emotions which they excited: 'their very nod speaks, their hands talk, and their fingers have a voice,' says one of their admirers. Montfaucon (*L'Antiq. Exp.*, v. 63) conjectures that they formed a select fraternity."§

To judge by two familiar anecdotes, the old mimes had brought their art to great perfection. Macrobius says it was a well-known fact that Cicero used to try with Roscius, the actor, which of them could express a sentiment in the greatest variety of ways, the player by mimicry or the orator by speech, and that these experiments gave Roscius such confidence in his art that he wrote a book comparing oratory with acting.|| Warburton tells a story of a certain Asiatic Prince, entertained at Rome by Augustus, being, among other shows and festivities, amused with a famous pantomime, whose actions were so expressive that the barbarian begged him of the Emperor for his interpreter between himself and several neighbouring nations, whose languages were unknown to one another.¶

The Spartans, indeed (as we are told by Herodotus), preferred converse by *action* to converse by *speech*, believing that action had all the clearness of speech, and was free from all the abuses of it. This historian, in his *Thalia*, informs us that when the Samians sent to Lacedemon for succour in distress, their orators made a long and laboured speech. When it was ended, the Spartans told them that *the former part of it they had forgotten, and could not comprehend the latter*. Whereupon the Samian orators produced their empty bread-baskets, and *said*, they wanted bread. *What need of words*, replied the Spartans; *do not your empty bread-baskets sufficiently declare your meaning?*

Of the Essenes, we are told by Porphyry, that "though meeting for the first time, the members of this sect at once salute each other as intimate friends;" and Matter informs us that the Gnostics communicated by means of emblems and symbols.**

The Friends of God, a secret fellowship belonging to the Rhineland, upon which recent research has thrown a much needed light, was founded by Nicholas of Basle in the fourteenth century, and are stated to have been sound in the faith as well as irreproachable in morals.†† The teachings of their founder were embodied in the sermons of his convert—John Tauler—and the messengers of the Fraternity recognised one another by certain secret signs.‡‡

* Taylor, *Apuleius*, xi., 287.

† *Miles Gloriosus*, iv., 2.

‡ Rich, *Companion to the Lat. and Greek Lexicon*, 153.

§ Disraeli, *Curiosities of Lit.*, ii., 120.

|| *Saturn*, ii., c. n.

¶ *Div. Leg.*, ii., 577.

** *Hist. Crit. Gnost.* ii., 369.

†† *Hibbert Lectures*, 1883, No. 1.

‡‡ Winkworth, *Life of Tauler*, 159

The Vehmgerichte, or Secret Tribunals of Westphalia, were declared lawful institutions in 1371, and during the 14th and 15th centuries their power rose to its height. The members were sworn to secrecy by a terrible oath, and recognised each other by various signs, the chief of which was the mysterious S.S.G.G., the precise meaning of which has never been revealed.

A symbolical language appears to have existed in the old monasteries, the signs not being optional, but transmitted from antiquity, and taught like the alphabet.* The Cistercian monks held speech, except in religious exercises, to be sinful, but for certain purposes communication among the brethren was necessary, so that the difficulty was met by the use of pantomimic signs. Two of their written lists or dictionaries are printed in the collected edition of Leibnitz's works, one in Latin, the other in Low German; they are not identical, but appear to be mostly or altogether derived from a list drawn up by authority.†

Disraeli tells us—

“ That the Monks had not in high veneration the *profane* authors appears by a facetious anecdote. To read the classics was considered as a very idle recreation, and some held them in great horror. To distinguish them from other books they invented a disgraceful sign: when a monk asked for a pagan author, after making the general sign they used in their manual and silent language when they wanted a book, he added a particular one, which consisted in scratching under his ear, as a dog, which feels an itching, scratches himself in that place with his paw—because, said they, an unbeliever is compared to a dog! In this manner they expressed an itching for those *dogs* Virgil or Horace! ”‡

A curious method of recognition, also relating to the monastic orders, is thus pleasantly narrated by the same ingenious author: “ By the monks it was imagined that holiness was often proportioned to a Saint's filthiness, and one of these heroes declares that the purest souls are in the dirtiest bodies. On this they tell a story of a Brother Juniper, who was a gentleman perfectly pious on this principle. Indeed, so great was his merit in this species of mortification, that a brother declared he could always nose Brother Juniper when within a mile of the monastery, provided the wind was at the due point.”

Much to the same point are the remarks of a modern writer in his reference to the habits of the priests of Diana, who were forbidden to enter the baths, and he observes, “ that in all religions emanating from the East, personal dirtiness has ever been the recognised outward and visible sign of inward purity—fully exemplified in fakirs, dervises, and mediæval saints.”§

I shall next allude to a semi-monastical Association, the *Komosō*, which, according to Japanese tradition, first came into prominent notice at the time of the rise of the last or Tokugawa dynasty of Shōguns—*i.e.*, in the year 1603. Its history prior to that date is unknown, but from then down to the year 1868 its existence was fully recognised.

The Society (or Fraternity) was filled from the ranks of the *Samurai* class alone, and entrance into it proved a means of refuge for any person who had committed a deed of bloodshed, &c., which rendered it necessary for him to flee away from the territory of his feudal chieftain. Thus its numbers were recruited chiefly from among those who had, under the influence of intoxication, or in some other way than of malice aforethought, killed or wounded a fellow clansman, a friend, or other person. None, however, was admitted who had been guilty of any disgraceful crime held to be unworthy of a *Samurai*—as, for instance, adultery, burglary, or theft.

The chief lands of the Society were situated in the province of Owari, a little to the east of the castle town of Wagoya, and slightly removed from the high road (*Tōkaidō*). Here was the *Honji*, or chief temple of the Society, but there were also *Matsuji*, or Branch Temples, in different parts of the country. Meetings were held in these Branch Temples at various intervals, and troops of *Komosō* were often to be seen entering some remote town or village in different localities; but where or when they met was a profound mystery, and the morrow's dawn saw them leaving the place as silently as they entered it.

The Society was under the command of a Chief, elected by the general votes of the members. Under him were an Assistant-Chief, Treasurer, and other officers; all chosen in a similar manner. The Chief usually resided at the principal Temple, and was invested with wide powers. His style of living and general position are said to have been equal to those of any *Daimiō*. He had power of life and death over all his fellows, and was only required to make a report to the Government in the event of any *Komosō* being put to death by his orders. The Assistant-Chief might act in his stead, whenever such necessity arose.

* Fosbrooke, *Brit. Monachism*, ii., 5.

† *Curiosities of Lit.*, i., 18.

‡ Tylor, *Early Hist. Mankind*, 40

§ King, *The Gnostics and their Remains*, 24.

Anyone desirous of entering the Society used to go to the Chief Temple, stating his case, and giving the reason why he had left his feudal lord's domain. He was then lodged in the Temple, while private enquiries were set on foot to ascertain the truth of his statement; if it was discovered that he had committed some unworthy deed, he was rejected and dismissed, but if it appeared that his offence of bloodshed was not premeditated, he was admitted into the Society with all due rites and ceremonies. What these rites were is unknown, but it is allowed that every candidate was bound by solemn oath to conceal them.

The distinctive dress of the *Komosō* was white, consisting of the loose Japanese *kimono* and tight-fitting trousers. The wide trousers and upper mantle usually worn by the *samurai* class were never used. They carried but one long sword. The hat was of bamboo, in shape resembling a large inverted basket of circular form, with a small aperture to enable the wearer to see freely. This hat was never removed during a journey; it was worn, too, in lodging houses, and even at meals. When sleeping, however, the *Komosō* might take it off, and in the temples of the Society it could be laid aside at will. A long staff and a flute completed their equipment, and certain notes blown on the latter formed one of the signs by which the members could make themselves known to their fellows.

The lands granted to the Society enabled its members to obtain sufficient means of maintenance. On a journey they were assisted by other *Komosō*, and often by outsiders also. If a *Komosō* met another person similarly attired, he at once challenged him by signs, &c., to ascertain if he were a true member of the Society. In case of failure to respond, such person was deemed to have assumed the garb merely as a disguise (as was, indeed, often the case), and the true *Komosō* was then held to be justified in seizing and confiscating the clothing of the pretender. The white clothing was in the first instance given to each man by the superior officers of the Society. The Chief, when travelling, was always attended by a select band of his fellows, and their journeys were performed on foot.

No women were admitted into the Society, and a man desirous of entering it used therefore to leave his wife and family in the charge of relatives or friends. A son was often admitted with his father, but boys of tender age were on no account received. Communication with the outer world was discountenanced, and it was an exceedingly difficult matter for any uninitiated person to gain access to a friend who had entered the Society. He was always subjected to rigid examination at the temple, before various members, ere he could be allowed to see his friend, and even then the interview was but brief.

Those members who died were buried in the temple enclosures, whenever this was practicable. The tombstones, so tradition has it, always bore the true name of the deceased, and thus, in death, were at last known the actual appellations of those who, during their lifetime, had wandered to and fro, homeless and unknown men. One of the principal *Komosō* cemeteries, is said to exist even now in the neighbourhood of Nagoya, and another to the east of Kioyoto; the very site, however, of the latter is well-nigh unknown, and it is probable that the former has shared the fate of the Chief Temple to which it was originally attached.

The *Komosō* were most numerous in the province of Owari (their headquarters) but large numbers were also found along the line of the Tōkaido and in the province of Shimōsa. They generally avoided the large towns, and kept to the country districts, where they received substantial assistance from the farming population, in the way of money, food, &c. It is a well-known fact that many of these mysterious men perished while fighting on the Tokugawa side in the battle in the temple-ground of Uyēno, in Tokiō on July 4th, 1868; and it is also stated that on that day a numerous band of their fellows, with others, were on the march from Shimōsa to succour the force besieged in Uyēno. A violent storm of wind and rain delayed their arrival until after the combat was over, but had it not been for this mishap the swords of these *Komosō* would doubtless have done good service in aid of the clan by whom their Society had been both recognised and assisted.

Many men entered the ranks of the *Komosō* not in consequence of any offence on their own part, but voluntarily, the better to carry out plans for avenging themselves on the murderer of a relative. It is said that instances have even been known of men so admitted discovering the murderers, of whom they were in search, among the *Komosō* themselves, and there and then carrying out the vendetta by killing the latter. Such cases, however, were undoubtedly very rare, though it is certainly within the bounds of possibility that both pursuer and pursued might have been enabled to find an asylum in the ranks of this strange fraternity.

Such is the history of the *Komosō* so far as is known to the outside world. Of their

secret arts and hidden mysteries it is improbable that anything further will come to light, for, according to oral assertion, their extinction as a Society was contemporary with the downfall of the Tokugawa dynasty. It remains, however, for after ages to prove this fact, and to determine whether the *Komosô* are really extinct, or likely to appear again under, perhaps, a fresh name and a different organisation.*

I pass over the shadowy and half-mythical Rosicrucians, the Steinmetzen, the Companionage, and other secret Societies and fraternities, all of which may have and probably had their special signs and modes of salutation and recognition, though we can only speculate upon their possible existence, without getting much nearer to what they really were. In a manuscript of the Order of Gregorians, written in the last century, I find the following: "The Sign Manual being given by the Grand, he shall give in charge to the new Brother, that in all these cases (for fear of discovery) he shd. chuse rather to receive than give the Sign."

Signs and pass-words, I think we may confidently assume, were common features of all or nearly all Secret Societies from the earliest times down to our own.

Boswell tells us, "the inhabitants of Corsica, like the Italians, express themselves much by signs. When I asked one of them if there had been many instances of the General [Paoli] foreseeing future events, he grasped a large bunch of his hair, and replied 'Tante Signore' (*so many, Sir*)."[†]

Among the aborigines of North America the language of Signs has attained a very high degree of development. Sir Richard Burton says: A remarkable characteristic of the Prairie Indian is his habit of speaking, like the deaf and dumb, with his fingers. The pantomime is a system of signs, some conventional, others instinctive or imitative, which enables tribes who have no acquaintance with each other's customs and tongues to hold limited but sufficient communication. An interpreter who knows all the Signs, which, however, are so numerous and complicated, that to acquire them is the labour of years, is preferred by the whites even to a good speaker. Some writers, as Captain Stansbury, consider the system purely arbitrary; others, Captain Marcy, for instance, hold it to be a natural language similar to the gestures which surd-mutes use spontaneously. Both views are true, but not wholly true.[‡]

It is, however, among the Prairie Indians alone that gesture-speech has arrived at such perfection, that it may properly be called a language, and this—as we learn from Colonel Dodge§—for the very sufficient reason that these tribes use it not only in intercourse with people whose oral language they neither speak nor understand, but for every-day intercourse among themselves. In their own camps and families, this language is used so constantly that it becomes a natural and instinctive habit; almost every man, even when using oral language, accompanying his words by sign-pictures conveying the same meaning. In this way wonderful facility and accuracy of expression by signs is attained. Of this "Indian pantomime," Tylor observes, "Captain Burton considers it to be a mixture of natural and conventional signs, but so far as I can judge from the one hundred and fifty or so which he describes, and those I find mentioned elsewhere, I do not believe that there is a really arbitrary sign among them. There are only about half a dozen of which the meaning is not at once evident, and even these appear on close inspection to be natural signs, perhaps a little abbreviated or conventionalized. I am sure that a skilled deaf-and-dumb talker would understand an Indian interpreter, and be himself understood at first sight, with scarcely any difficulty. The Indian pantomime and the gesture language of the deaf-and-dumb are but different dialects of the same language of nature."

Within comparatively a few years the attention of philologists has been particularly directed to the sign language. Some authorities assert that "all the tribes of North American Indians have had, and still use, a common and identical sign language of ancient origin," which serves as a medium of converse from Hudson Bay to the Gulf of Mexico. Others deny this. To learn it sufficiently well for ordinary intercourse is no more difficult than to learn any foreign language; to master it, one must have been born in a lodge of Prairie Indians and have been accustomed to its daily and hourly use from his earliest to mature years.

Two expert sign-talkers engaged in conversation will make every sign with one hand so distinctly as to be understood. Two Indians, each wrapped up in a blanket tightly held with the left hand, will thrust the right from under its folds and engage in animated conversation. So also when on horseback, though the left hand is holding the reins, the conversation will not flag nor be misunderstood.

* T. M. M'Latchie.

† *Account of Corsica*, 2nd Edition, 1768, p. 345.

‡ *City of the Saints*, 150 et seq.

§ *Our Wild Indians*, chap. xxix.

On the other hand, however, a slight unintentional gesture may entirely alter the meaning that an amateur sign-talker is desirous of conveying. Thus, Baillie Grohman undertook to say to an Arapahoe—"How has it come to pass that the bravest of the brave, the man of all men, the dearest friend I have among the Arapahoes, has grown such a flowing beard?"—but only succeeded in informing the gentle savage "that his face was like a young maiden's, and his heart that of an old squaw."*

The Arapahoes, who possess a very scanty vocabulary, can hardly converse with one another in the dark, and like the Bushmen of South Africa—who intersperse their language with so many signs that they are only intelligible during daylight—when they want to converse at night are compelled to collect round their camp fires.†

A story is told by Burton of a man who, being sent among the Cheyennes to qualify himself for interpreting, returned in a week and proved his competence. All that he did, however, was to go through the usual pantomime with a running accompaniment of grunts.

The first lesson is to distinguish the signs of the different tribes, each of which has not only its distinctive name, but also its sign, by which it is known and designated by all other Indians. "It will be observed," says Burton, "that the French voyageurs and traders have often named the Indian natives from their totemic or Masonic gestures—

"The Pawnees (*Les Loups*) imitate a wolf's ears with the two forefingers; the right hand is always understood unless otherwise specified.‡

"The Arapahoes, or Dirty Noses, rub the right side of that organ with the forefinger. Some, however, call this bad tribe the Smellers, and make their sign to consist of seizing the nose with the thumb and forefinger.

"The Comanches (*Les Serpents*) imitate by the waving of the hand or forefinger the forward crawling motion of a snake.

"The Cheyennes, Paikanavos, or Cut Wrists, draw the edge of the hand across the left arm, as if gashing it with a knife.

"The Sioux (*Les Coupes-gorges*) by drawing the lower edge of the hand across the throat. It is a gesture not unknown to us, but forms a truly ominous salutation, considering those by whom it is practised; hence the Sioux are called by the Yutas, Pampe Chyimina, or Hand-cutters.

"The Hapsaroke (*Les Cerbeaux*), by imitating the flapping of the bird's wings with the two hands—palms downwards—brought close to the shoulders.

"The Kiowas, or Prairie-men, make the sign of the prairie and of drinking water.

"The Yutas, 'they who live on the mountains,' have a complicated sign which denotes living in mountains."

"The Blackfeet, called by the Yutas, Paike or Goers, pass the right hand, bent-spoon fashion, from the heel to the little toe of the right foot."§

Further tribal signs are given by Dodge, from whose description I take the following:—

The Northern Arapahoes join the fingers and thumb of the right hand, and strike the points on the left breast several times.

The Apaches move the right hand in much the same way as a barber strops a razor.

Among the miscellaneous signs may be cited those of "Hat Wearer," by which, with apt gestures, the White Man is referred to, "Beard Wearer" in like manner applied to the Mexican, and "Black White Man" to the Negro.||

The sign of Love is made by folding the hands crosswise over the breast, as if embracing the object, assuming at the same time a look expressing the desire to carry out the operation. This gesture, Sir Richard Burton assures us, will be understood by the dullest squaw.

The Indians, observes the same careful writer, like the Bedouin and North African Moslems, do honour to strangers and guests by putting their horses to speed, couching their lances, and other peculiarities, which would readily be dispensed with by gentlemen of peaceful pursuits and shaky nerves. If friendly, the band will halt when the hint is given, and return the salute; if not, they will disregard the order to stop, and probably will make the sign of danger. Then—ware scalp!

Colonel Dodge informs us—"It is asserted by squaw men and others, in a position to know, that almost every tribe of Indians has its secret societies, which have passwords,

* Dunn, *Massacres of the Mountains*, 226.

† Lubbock, *Origin of Civilization*, 227.

‡ The left, as a rule, denotes inversion or contradiction.

§ Burton *loc. cit.*

|| *Our Wild Indians*, 379-94.

grips, and signs, as the Masons, Oddfellows, &c. I have never been able positively to ascertain the truth or falsity of this statement. Most of the Indians deny it, but from the grim silence that falls upon an occasional old head-man, when asked about it, I suspect it may be true."*

The existence, among the Aborigines of North America, of Fraternities bound by mystic ties, and claiming, like the Freemasons, to possess an esoteric knowledge, is, I believe, fairly well attested. De Witt Clinton relates, on the authority of a respectable native minister, who had attended the signs, the existence of such a society among the Iroquois. The number of the members was limited to fifteen, of whom six were to be of the Seneca tribe, five of the Oneidas, two of the Cayugas, and two of the St. Regis. They claim that this institution has existed from the era of the Creation. The late Giles Fonda Yates, in his work on the ceremonies of the Indian tribes, sought ingeniously, if not satisfactorily, to discover a Masonic meaning in the Indian mystic rites.†

The experiment of bringing Indians and deaf-mutes together has often been tried during visits of Indians to the East, and they always communicate readily, the signs being, of course, ideographic. A very wonderful demonstration of the extent of natural meaning in signs and expression was a test exhibition by President Gallaudet, of the National Deaf Mute College, at Washington, in which he related intelligibly to a pupil the story of Brutus ordering the execution of his two sons for disobedience, without making a motion with hand or arms, or using any previously determined sign or other communication, but simply by facial expression and motion of the head.‡

Religious service is performed in signs in many deaf-and-dumb schools. In the Berlin Institution, the simple Lutheran service, a prayer, the gospel for the day, and a sermon, is acted every Sunday morning in the gesture-language for the children in the school and the deaf-and-dumb inhabitants of the city, and it is a remarkable sight. "No one," says Tylor, "could see the parable of the man who left the ninety and nine sheep in the wilderness, and went after that which was lost, or of the woman who lost the one piece of silver, performed in expressive pantomime by a master in the art, without acknowledging that for telling a simple story and making simple comments on it, spoken language falls far behind acting. The spoken narrative must lose the sudden anxiety of the shepherd when he counts his flock and finds a sheep wanting, his hurried penning up the rest, his running up hill and down dell, and spying backwards and forwards, his face lighting up when he catches sight of the missing sheep in the distance, his bringing it home in his arms, hugging it as he goes. We hear these stories read as though they were lists of generations of antediluvian patriarchs. The deaf-and-dumb pantomime calls to mind the 'action, action,' of Demosthenes."§

"None of my teachers here who can speak," said the Director of the Berlin Deaf and Dumb Institution, "are very strong in the gesture language. It is difficult for an educated speaking man to get the proficiency in it which a deaf-and-dumb child attains to almost without an effort. It is true that I can use it perfectly; but I have been here forty years, and I made it my business from the first to become thoroughly master of it. To be able to speak is an impediment, not an assistance, in acquiring the gesture-language. The habit of thinking in words, and translating these words into signs, is most difficult to shake off; but until this is done, it is hardly possible to place the signs in the logical sequence in which they arrange themselves in the mind of the deaf-mute."||

The best evidence of the unity of the gesture-language (to quote the words of Mr. Tylor), is the ease and certainty with which any savage from any country can understand and be understood in a Deaf and Dumb School. A native of Hawaii is taken to an American institution, and begins at once to talk in signs with the children, and to tell about his voyage and the country he came from. A Chinese, who had fallen into a state of melancholy from long want of society, is quite revived by being taken to the same place, where he can talk in gestures to his heart's content. A deaf-and-dumb lad named Collins is taken to see some Laplanders, who were carried about to be exhibited, and writes thus to his fellow-pupils about the Lapland woman:—"Mr. Joseph Humphreys told me to speak to her by signs, and she understood me. When Cunningham was with me, asking Lapland woman, and she frowned at him and me. She did not know we were deaf and dumb, but afterwards she knew that we were. Then she spoke to us about reindeers and elks, and smiled at us much."¶

* *Op. cit.*, 131.
|| *Ibid.*, 21.

† Mackey, 62, 899.

‡ Dunn, 223.

§ *Early Hist. of Mankind*, 33.

¶ *Ibid.*, 54.

Long, however, before the days of Deaf and Dumb Institutions, it had been remarked by Rabelais, how natural and appropriate were the untaught signs made by born deaf-mutes. When Panurge is going to try by divination from signs what his fortune will be in married life, Pantagruel thus counsels him—"Pourtant vous fault choisir ung mut sourd de nature, afin que les *gestes* vous soyent naïvement propheticques, non faintz, fardez, ne affectez." Nor does this reference exhaust the allusions by the Great Master to the language of gesture, and it will be sufficient to allude to one of the chapters (xix.) in his second book, which is thus headed:—"How Panurge puts to a non-plus the Englishman that argued by signs."

The Jesuit, Lafitau, in his "*Mœurs des Sauvages*,"* observes: "Les Iroquois, comme les Lacedemoniens, veulent un discours vif et concis; leur style est cependant figuré, et tout *metaphorique*." Condamine gives a very similar account of the savages of South America. Speaking of their language, he says, "plusieurs sont énergiques et susceptible d'éloquence,"† which can mean no other than that their terms are highly figurative. But this is the universal genius of the language of barbarians. Egede in his "*Description of Greenland*," states: "the language is very rich of words and sense; and of such *energy* that one is often at a loss and puzzled to render it into Danish."‡ This *energy* is without doubt what the French missionary calls *tout metaphorique*.

Alexander von Humboldt has left on record his experiences of the gesture-language among the Indians of the Orinoco: "'After you leave my mission,' said the good monk of Uruana, 'you will travel like mutes.' This prediction was almost accomplished, and not to lose all the advantage that is to be had from intercourse even with the most brutalized Indians, we have sometimes preferred the language of signs."

Describing the Puris and Coroados of Brazil, Spix and Martius, having remarked that different tribes converse in signs, and explained the difficulty they found in making them understand by signs the objects or ideas for which they wanted the native names, go on to say how imperfect and devoid of inflexion or construction these languages are. Signs with hand or mouth, they say, are required to make them intelligible. To say, "I will go into the wood," the Indian uses the words "wood-go," and points his mouth like a snout in the direction he means.§

Gesture-signs are mentioned by Captain Cook as forming an accompaniment to spoken language among the Tahitians, who, he says, "joined signs to their words, which were so expressive that a stranger might easily apprehend their meaning."||

Mr. W. Simson, in his "*History of the Gipsies*," says—"Not only have they had a language peculiar to themselves, but signs as exclusively theirs as are those of the Freemasons. The distinction consists in this people having *blood, language, a cast of mind, and signs*, peculiar to itself."

Mr. Laurence Oliphant tells us, "The Druses have secret signs of recognition, and are in fact organised as a powerful political, as well as secret society;" and the same writer goes on to say, "among the Ansariyeh there are two classes, as among the Druses—the initiated and the uninitiated,"¶—but the curious reader who may wish to pursue the inquiry is referred to the account of the "Ansaireh or Nusairis of Syria," given in the "*Asian Mystery*," by the Rev. Samuel Lyde.

Of the Todas of the Neilgherries, Sir Richard Burton says, "A brother Mason informs us that the Todas use a sign of recognition similar to ours, and they have discovered that Europeans have an institution corresponding with their own." Yet as the great traveller goes on to say, "but in our humble opinion, next to the antiquary in simplicity of mind, capacity of belief, and capability of assertion, ranks the Freemason**—it will be best, perhaps, not to lay too much stress on the alleged similarity between customs that after all may, and probably do not, possess a single feature in common."

Mr. Wilfrid Powell, who passed three years of his life among the Cannibals of New Britain, thus describes the Duk-duk Society of that island:—"The Duk-duk is both a curse and a blessing of his people; he certainly keeps order and makes the natives afraid to commit any flagrant act of felony, but at the same time it encourages cannibalism and terrorism."

There are secret signs between the initiated by which they know each other from outsiders. It is curious how widely distributed is this Duk-duk system in the north peninsula of New Britain. It is in nearly every district, also in New Ireland, from the west coast lying south of the Rossel Mountains to Cape St. George, and how far it may spread on the other side I cannot tell."††

* i., 480.

† *Travels*, p. 54.

‡ p. 165.

§ *Tyler*, 34, 76.

|| Hawkesworth's *Voyages*, ii., 228.

¶ *The Land of Gilead*, 35, 402.

** *God and the Blue Mountains*, 349.

†† *Wanderings in a Wild Country*, 63.

A theory has been advanced that the gesture-language was the original language of man, and that speech came afterwards. But we have no trustworthy evidence of man ever having lived in society without the use of spoken language, though there are some myths of such races, and, moreover, statements have been made by modern writers of eminence as to an intermediate state between gesture-language and word-language, which claim a brief examination.

"In Ethiopia, across the desert," says the geographer, Pomponious Mela, "there dwell dumb people, and such as use gestures instead of language; others whose tongues give no sound; others who have no tongues." Pliny gives much the same account. Some of the Ethiopian tribes are said to have no noses, some no upper lips, some no tongues. Some have for their languages nods and gestures.

To go thoroughly into the discussion of these stories would require an investigation of the whole subject of the legends of monstrous tribes; but an off-hand rationalizing explanation may be sufficient here. The frequent use of the gesture-language by savage tribes in intercourse with strangers may combine with the very common opinion of uneducated men that the talk of foreigners is not real speech at all, but a kind of inarticulate chirping, barking, or grunting.**

This view will derive support from the following examples:—Mercer, describing the low condition of some of the Veddah tribes of Ceylon, stated that not only is their dialect incomprehensible to a Singhalese, but that even their communications with one another are made by signs, grimaces, and guttural sounds, which bear little or no resemblance to distinct words or systematized language.

Also, Dr. Milligan, speaking of the language of Tasmania, the habit of gesticulation, and the use of signs to eke out monosyllabic expressions, says that the Aborigines conveyed in a supplementary fashion by tone, manner, and gesture, many modifications of meaning, which are otherwise expressed by ourselves.†

A remarkable statement is made by Ibn Batuta, in the account of his journey into the Soudan, in the fourteenth century. He mentions as an evil thing which he has observed in the conduct of the blacks, that women may only come unclothed into the presence of the Sultan of Melli, and even the Sultan's own daughters must conform to the custom. He notices, also, that they threw dust and ashes on their heads as a sign of reverence, which makes it appear that the stripping was also a mere act of humiliation.‡ With regard to the practice of uncovering the feet, Tylor says, when we find the Damaras, in South Africa, taking off their sandals before entering a stranger's house, the idea of connecting the practice with the ancient Egyptian custom, or of ascribing it to Moslem influence, at once suggests itself, but the taking off the sandals as a sign of respect seems to have prevailed in Peru.§ No common Indian, it is said, dared go shod along the Street of the Sun, nor might anyone, however great lord he might be, enter the house of the Sun with his shoes on, and even the Inca himself went barefoot into the temple of the Sun.||

In this group of reverential uncoverings, the idea that the subject presents himself naked, defenceless, poor and miserable before his lord, seems to be dramatically expressed, and this view is borne out by the practice of stripping, or uncovering the head and feet as a sign of mourning,¶ where there can hardly be anything but destitution and misery to be expressed.**

The custom (or as called by some Masonic authors, the rite) of discalceation—i.e., the act of putting off the shoes as a sign of reverence, is frequently referred to in the sacred writings,†† and Dr. Adam Clarke considered the custom of worshipping the Deity barefooted to have been so general among all nations of antiquity, that in his commentary on Exodus he assigns it as one of his thirteen proofs that the whole human race have been derived from one family.

The lowest class of salutations, says Tylor, which merely aim at giving pleasant bodily sensations, merge into the civilities which we see exchanged among the lower animals. Such are patting, stroking, kissing, pressing noses, blowing, sniffing, and so forth. The often-described sign of pleasure or greeting of the Indians of North America, by rubbing each other's arms, breasts, and stomachs, and their own, is similar to the Central African custom, of two men clasping each other's arms with both hands, and rubbing them up and down, and that of stroking one's own face with another's hand or foot, in Polynesia: and the pattings and slappings of the Fuegians belong to the same class. Darwin describes

* Tylor, 75, 76.

† *Ibid.*, 77.

‡ *Travels of Ibn Batuta*, 240.

§ *Or. Trans.*

|| Prescott, *Conquest of Peru*, i., 97.

¶ *Micah*, i., 8; *Ezekiel*, xxiv., 17.

** Tylor, *et supra*, 51.

†† *Exodus*, iii., 5; *Joshua*, v., 15; *Ecclesiastes*, v., 1.

the way in which noses are pressed in New Zealand, with details which have escaped less accurate observers. It is curious that Linnæus found the salutation by touching noses in the Lapland Alps. People did not kiss, but put noses together. The Andaman Islanders salute by blowing into another's hand with a cooing murmur. Charlevoix speaks of an Indian tribe in the Gulf of México who blew into one another's ears; and Du Chaillu describes himself as having been blown upon in Africa. Natural experiences of joy, such as clapping hands in Africa, and jumping up and down in Tierra del Fuego, are made do duty as signs of friendship or greeting.*

There are a number of well-known gestures which are hard to explain. Such are various signs of hatred and contempt—for example, lolling out the tongue, which is a universal sign, though it is not clear why it should be so, biting the thumb, making the sign of the stork's bill behind another's back (*ciconiam facere*), and the sign known as "taking a sight," which was as common at the time of Rabelais as it is now.†

Shaking hands, it may be observed, is not a custom which belongs naturally to all mankind, and we may sometimes trace its introduction into countries where it was before unknown. The Fijians, for instance, who used to salute by smelling or sniffing at one another, have learnt to shake hands from the missionaries. The Wa-nika, near Mombaz, grasp hands, but they use the Moslem variety of the gesture, which is to press the thumbs against one another as well, and this makes it all but certain that the practice is one of the many effects of Moslem influence in East Africa.‡

Tylor lays down that gesture-language is a natural mode of expression common to mankind in general, and also that it is the same in principle and similar in its details all over the world. "It is true," he remarks, "that the signs used in different places and by different persons are only partially the same; but it must be remembered that the same idea may be expressed in signs in very many ways, and that it is not necessary that all should choose the same.

The "universelle longage of Maçonnes" is named in the Leland-Locke MS. as being among those secrets which "the Maçonnes concele and hyde." This document has of late years been given up as apocryphal, though it exercised no slight influence in its time. The original was said to have been in the handwriting of King Henry VI., the copy to have been made by John Leland, the antiquary, and the annotations to have been the work of John Locke, the philosopher.

In his alleged commentary Locke is made to say: "An universal language has been much desired by the learned of many ages. It is a thing rather to be wished than hoped for." It is evident, however, says Mackey, "That such a substitute for a universal language has always existed among mankind. There are certain expressions of ideas which, by an implied common consent, are familiar even to the most barbarous tribes. An extension forward of the open hands will be understood at once by an Australian savage or an American Indian as a gesture betokening peace, while the idea of war or dislike would be as readily conveyed to either of them by a repulsive gesture of the same hands."§ "These are not, however," continues the same careful writer, "what constitute the signs of Masonry." The words last cited are worthy of remembrance, and may aid in dispelling many an illusion. The crop of "traveller's tales," increases year by year, wherein as a common feature, appear either the manifestation or the recognition of Masonic signs by Arabs of the desert, native Australians, Bushmen, Afghans, and the like. In the expressive pantomime of the gesture-language, an Indian, it has been said, will by his signs, "talk all over," his whole body being made use of to convey a message,|| but in all cases of the kind whatever resemblances may appear to exist with our Masonic customs, will, in the vast majority of cases, be fortuitous only, and fall within the doctrine of "chance coincidences"—a phrase very happily coined by Mr. Hyde Clarke in 1864.

* Tylor, *ubi supra*, 51, 52.
|| Emerson, *Indian Myths*, 270.

† *Ibid.*

‡ *Ibid.*, 45.

§ *Encl. of F.*, 715.

IX.

FREE AND FREEMASONRY.

[*Reprinted from "The Freemason" of September 10th and 17th, 1898.*]

FREE AND FREEMASONRY.

[*Freemason*, Sept. 10th and 17th, 1898.]

I.

*The sea of knowledge, with its din,
Before us breaks, and we,
We thrust our little dippers in
And think we've drained the sea.*—S. W. Foss.

A paper of great originality and power, bearing the above title, was read by Bro. G. W. Speth before the Lodge of the Quatuor Coronati, on the 8th of January, 1897.

Since the foregoing date, several new "parts" of the great "English Dictionary" of the Philological Society have appeared, and attention has already been directed in the present journal (of August 6th and 13th) to definitions which are given of the words *Free* and *Freemason*.

The first letter on the subject was written by the Rev. E. Fox-Thomas and the next by Dr. Chetwode Crawley, but to the remarks of the latter brother I shall first of all refer, as they supply the reason why I have selected certain definitions occurring under the letter F. in the "New English Dictionary," as presenting a suitable theme for an article in the *Freemason*.

Dr. Crawley, after stating that a modification of Bro. Speth's theory has been adopted by the learned Editors of the Dictionary, goes on to say, "The tribunal is the highest in the Republic of Letters as far as Philosophy is concerned. The Editors are men of world-wide reputation as scholars, they are completely outside the Craft, and thus totally unbiassed by the traditional misconception that we have inherited from our Masonic forefathers. We must ruefully acknowledge that the number of Masonic authors whose works command respect among scholars can be summed up on the fingers. Hence the great value of the *authoritative recognition* [italics mine] of this theory of Bro. Speth's, at once so novel and so modestly introduced."

I shall premise that the excellent paper read by Bro. Speth, has no warmer admirer than myself. It is in every respect an ornament to the columns of *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum*, and one hardly knows whether to pay the greater tribute of respect to the patient industry of the writer, or to the masterly manner in which his arguments are arranged.

Anything like an adequate summary of the views advanced by Bro. Speth, in what he so modestly terms "a Tentative Enquiry," would carry me too far, but his principal conclusion has been summed up very tersely and well by Bro. Conder (in discussing the paper), whose words I reproduce: "That about the end of the thirteenth century or early in the fourteenth, the members of our Craft were known as freemasons, because they were free *from*, and not free *of* trade Guilds, and municipal authority; that is to say, they were in no way bound by Civic or Guild rules and regulations, and in fact occupied an almost unique position unknown in every other handicraft, that of being able to rely on their own constitutions and laws for support and reference in any case of dispute, and on the Church in particular for their daily employment." The same brother continues, and with irresistible cogency—"to prove this theory is a difficulty, to refute it, a greater."

The editors of the "English Dictionary," however, after examining and rejecting two popular theories (1) that *freemason* was derived from *mason de franche pere*, and (2) that *freemasons* were those who were "free" of the masons' guild, proceed to deal with what I have called the "principal conclusion" of our Bro. Speth, which they recite very much after the manner of Bro. Conder, and conclude by an expression of their opinion, that perhaps the best hypothesis is that the term refers to the mediæval practice of emancipating skilled artisans in order that they might be able to travel and render their services wherever any great building was in process of construction.

"It will be seen" (observes Bro. Crawley) "that a modification of Bro. Speth's theory has been adopted by the learned Editors after prolonged research and an exhaustive survey of the whole ground."

"That" an exhaustive survey of the whole ground "cannot possibly have been made by the compilers of the *Dictionary* will shortly enter into the scope of these remarks, but I shall submit, in the first instance, that even if the *dictum* of our Bro. Crawley is to be

regarded as incontrovertible, that in the matter immediately before us, the "tribunal" whose decision he quotes so approvingly, is "the highest in the Republic of Letters," the utmost point to which it carries us, is by no means an "Authoritative recognition of Bro. Speth's Philological theory of the words *Free and Freemason*," but by the greatest latitude of interpretation can only be viewed as elevating it into the position of what may be described in the language of Dr. Kuenen, as the "dominant hypothesis."

Dr. Crawley observes with much force that the number of Masonic authors whose works command respect among scholars is infinitesimal. The "fact," for such it undoubtedly is, must, as he pleasantly puts it, be "ruefully acknowledged"; nevertheless a melancholy consolation may perhaps be derived from the reflection that, in the abyss of ignorance to which we are consigned, there is a lower depth still, which is occupied by those—including scholars and men-of-letters—who venture to write on the subject of Freemasonry, without having been admitted within the portals of the Institution.

Exceptio probat regulam—"The exception proves the rule"—and in the course of a long Masonic life, I can remember but a solitary instance of anyone unacquainted with our "mysteries" having written with discrimination on topics which fall, in strictness, within the province of Masonic writers, and are rarely discussed except in what, for want of a better term, may be called the literature of the Craft.

The well-known architectural writer and historian, Wyatt Papworth—whose comparatively recent death will be fresh in the recollections of most readers of the *Freemason*—is the authority to whom I allude. Nearly 40 years ago, Mr. Papworth read a Paper on the "Superintendents of English Buildings in the Middle Ages," which appeared in the *Transactions* of the R.I.B.A. for 1860, and, after a lapse of more than a quarter of a century, it was awarded the rare distinction of reproduction in the same professional journal.

To what may be called the second edition of this remarkable Paper—which will be found in the *Transactions* of the R.I.B.A. (1887), Vol. iii., *N.S.*, pp. 185-234—was appended the following editorial note: "The contributions, perhaps as important as any ever published by the Royal Institute of British Architects, having been now thoroughly revised under the care of Mr. Papworth, are here reprinted, with further notes and other addenda, collated by him. The esteem shown for his various Papers has been proved by the reference to them and reprints from them in various publications, especially by Mr. J. G. Findel (*History of Freemasonry*, 8vo., Lond., 1866, translated from the German), and by Mr. R. F. Gould (*History of Freemasonry*, 4to., six vols., Lond., 1882-87), who, to some extent following the same enquiry, not only availed himself largely of the contents, but carefully added to them, criticised various portions, and elaborated others."

It may be added, that the original authorities for the "Master Masons," and for many of the other statements contained in the Paper aforesaid, will be found in *The Dictionary*, issued by the Architectural Publication Society, where also articles by Mr. Papworth, under the headings of "Architect, Freemason, Lodge, Master Mason," etc., etc., can be referred to.

The Editors of the *English Dictionary* of the Philological Society do not, however, appear to have studied Wyatt Papworth except through the medium of Bro. Findel, and the latter, I more than suspect—drew *his* inspiration not from the original fount, but from a somewhat imperfect copy of the Paper printed by the R.I.B.A. in 1860, which was published in the *Freemasons' Magazine and Masonic Mirror* of slightly later date.

But I must proceed by steps, and the point to which I shall next address myself is the question—Whether there are others besides the late Wyatt Papworth who, though not belonging to the Craft, can be relied upon either as purveyors of authentic Masonic intelligence, or as sagacious critics in matters closely bound up with the history of the Fraternity.

To begin with the encyclopædias, can an example be given where the subject of "Masonry" (or "Freemasonry") has been treated with the slightest approach to accuracy in any one of these repositories? It is true, no doubt, that an excellent account of the Masonic Institution will be found in *Johnston's Universal Cyclopædia* (New York, 1895) which may seem at a first view to answer my question in the affirmative; but as the familiar name of "Josiah H. Drummond" is subscribed to the article, the illustration has really no bearing whatever on the point I have submitted for consideration.

But while it is very evident that the encyclopædists are not to be relied upon in their accounts of Freemasonry, shall we be justified in arriving at a different conclusion when we pass into the regions of lexicography, and examine more particularly the definitions of "Free" and "Freemason," which are given in the Dictionary of the Philological Society

A copious extract from the latest addition to the "dictionary" was given by Bro E.

Fox-Thomas, in the *Freemason* of August 6th (p. 370), a portion of which I reproduce :
 "Free masons, in the fourteenth and following centuries, were a certain class of skilled workers in stone .∴ they travelled from place to place, finding employment wherever important buildings were being erected, and had a system of secret signs and passwords by which a craftsman who had been admitted, on giving evidence of competent skill could be recognised .∴ In 1717, under the guidance of the physicist J. T. Desaguliers, four of these societies or 'Lodges,' in London united to form a 'Grand Lodge,' with a new Constitution and ritual, and a system of secret signs." X

That the "Freemasons" (or Masons) of the fourteenth century possessed a system of secret signs and words by which a travelling workman could be recognised, is a statement that will be more particularly examined in the final portion of the present article, but I may at once remark, that to the best of my knowledge, nothing but conjecture—pure and simple—can be advanced in its support. X

The next assertion, namely, that Dr. Desaguliers was the founder of the first of the Grand Lodges, has been made, apparently, on the authority of Findel, who, at p. 136 of his well-known work, incorporates with a narrative of the proceedings of the Grand Lodge of England, a highly imaginative magazine article, dealing with and summarily deciding one of the most important points in Masonic history. Long ago—February 26th, 1881—I wrote in the *Freemason*, "As a suggestion, speculation, or theory, the reconstruction of the Society by Desaguliers may, perhaps, be soberly entertained, but as the statement of a fact, and unsupported by a *scintilla* of evidence, its appearance in such 'Masonic Classics' as Findel's 'History of Masonry,' and Lyon's 'History of the Lodge of Edinburgh,' is calculated, to say the least, to weaken the authority of those standard works."

The journal on which Bros. Findel and Lyon relied, was the *Masonic Eclectic* (now defunct), a monthly magazine, edited by John W. Simons and Robert Macoy, and published at New York. In volume 1, at p. 189, there appears : "Desaguliers, by the Latomia Society of Atlantic Lodge," and the following are the opening words of the article : "That the revival of Masonry in 1717, or, rather, the new form which it then assumed as a speculative institution, was mainly owing to the efforts of Dr. Desaguliers there seems to be no doubt." We are further told, and the *ipsissima verba* re-appear in the famous "Histories" referred to above, that "the spirit of toleration which [Desaguliers] found prevailing among the members of the fraternity, inspired him with the idea of reconstructing the Society on a basis which should unite together in harmony those who were divided by religious and political schisms." The "Latomia," or Masonic Historical Society of Atlantic Lodge, No. 178, New York, was founded in October, 1858, for the purpose of encouraging and promoting the study of Freemasonry, by a free discussion and investigation of its origin, history, and principles, and by the collection of a Masonic library. The lodge still exists, but the Society, unless my recollection is at fault, has long since been dissolved.

The date of Dr. Desaguliers' initiation is unknown. He is first mentioned as a Mason in the *Constitutions* of 1723 ; and subsequently, with greater particularity, in the edition of 1738, as having been installed as Grand Master on June 24th, 1719. We afterwards meet with his name as a member of the Lodge at the Horn, Westminster, in 1723. This Lodge had previously met at the Rummer and Grapes, in Channel-row, Westminster, and as in 1718, Desaguliers resided in Channel-row, the propinquity of a lodge and his love of goodfellowship, suggest a very simple reason for his becoming a Freemason. I do not believe, however, that he had been one many months when he was elected Grand Master, for it is almost certain that had the learned natural philosopher been a member of the Society in June, 1718, the date of George Payne's first Grand Mastership, he would have been elected a Grand Warden. I am also very strongly of opinion that if Payne or Desaguliers had been present at the Goose and Gridiron ale-house, on St. John's Day, 1717, or if they had participated in the movement which culminated in the meeting of that date, one or the other would have been elected Grand Master.

But, at any rate, there is an entire absence of proof that Desaguliers was a Mason prior to the year 1719, and no one (unless he has been taken into supernatural confidence) is justified in affirming, as a statement of fact, that the four London Lodges united "under the guidance" of the learned "physicist" for the purpose of forming a "Grand Lodge" in 1717.

II.

Few scholars are critics, few critics are philosophers, and few philosophers look with equal care on both sides of a question.—W. S. LANDOR.

The aggregate testimony of our neighbours is subject to the same conditions as the testimony of any one of them. Every man who has accepted the statement from somebody else, without himself testing and verifying it, is out of court; his word is worth nothing at all.—W. K. CLIFFORD.

I do not suppose for an instant that my friend, Dr. Chetwode Crawley, would argue that the adoption by the Editors of the new Oxford Dictionary, of the story related in the *Masonic Eclectic*, constitutes "an authoritative recognition" of the altogether baseless theory advanced with so much confidence by the "Latomia Society." But when a writer is proved to be grossly inaccurate or unduly credulous on one point, it is, at least, reasonable to suppose that he may be equally wrong, and not in any lesser degree open to be deceived on another.

The "New Dictionary," as we learn from the title-page, is being compiled on "historical principles," hence a criticism of its contents is by no means restricted to those

"———Learn'd philologists, who chase
A panting syllable through time and space,
Start it at home, and hunt it in the dark,
To Gaul, to Greece, and into Noah's Ark."

It is not given to every one of us to be skilled in the science of language, *i.e.*, in the study of languages for their structure and relations—but of the little band of brethren who associate for Masonic research under the banner of the Quatuor Coronati, it may be said that they are all (without exception), more or less diligent students of the *history* and antiquities of Freemasonry.

As one of their number, I have already ventured to call in question the accuracy of one of the *statements* in the "Dictionary," and an examination of another and equally positive avouchment of what also purports to be a well ascertained *fact*, will next be proceeded with.

The "Free Masons," we learn, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, travelled from place to place, seeking employment in their trade, "and had a system of secret signs and passwords by which a craftsman who had been admitted, on giving evidence of competent skill could be recognised." (See part I. of the present article.)

Here, the learned editors of the "English Dictionary" evidently pin their faith on the introductory observations which prepare the reader for the development of the remarkable theory, advanced with such persuasive force and dialectical ability by our Bro. Speth, in his "Tentative Enquiry" concerning the words "Free" and "Freemasonry."

The greater comprehends the less, and in looking at Bro. Speth's paper as a whole, though my glance of it must necessarily be a more rapid one than I could desire, the "positive avouchment" in the dictionary, to which attention has been drawn so recently above, will be considered with all the fulness at my command.

Before, however, parting company with the editors of the "New English Dictionary," let me express my regret that a more "exhaustive survey of the whole ground" was not made before putting on paper their definitions of the terms "Free" and "Freemason."

Besides Bro. Speth's paper (the value of which, indeed, I should be one of the last to underrate), the only Masonic works consulted *at first-hand* appear to have been the "History" of Bro. Findel and the "Hole Craft" of Bro. Conder respectively. From the former they would appear to have derived such acquaintance as they may possess with the writings of the late Wyatt Papworth, while in the pages of the latter they have been made familiar with the "Diary" of Elias Ashmole, "The Academie of Armoury" of Randle Holme, and the notable "Aubrey memorandum" of 1691. But the actual argument of Wyatt Papworth, in regard to the origin and derivation of "Freemason," as contained in his "Superintendents of English Buildings in the Middle Ages" they evidently have not perused, nor apparently the remarks of Dr. Begemann in his letter of May 16th, 1897 (*A. Q. C.*, X. 156), and while I shall not contend that either of these excellent authorities has established as a fact, that "Freemason" has come down to us from *mestre mason de franche pere*, I unhesitatingly assert that from the paper of the one, and the letter of the other, we gain a good working hypothesis, which in common with what is called the "Guild" theory (still possessing many supporters, though unaccountably neglected in the "New Dictionary,") and the "Tentative Enquiry" of our Bro. Speth, will have to be "reckoned with," by any Masonic historian of the future who attempts the arduous task of making "an exhaustive survey of the whole ground."

To make use of a comparison—a case, let us suppose, is carried into court, and (it may be) very rightly decided in favour of the plaintiff; nevertheless, the administration of justice, locally speaking, would fall into disrepute, if a hearing had been refused to the greater bulk of the evidence which was tendered by the defendant.

Passing, however, to the third (and last) of the theories referred to above, this remarkable piece of constructive speculation will perhaps be more easily discussed if I broach, in the first instance, a rival hypothesis, which, if entitled to any weight, would seem to strike at the root of the supposition that the operative Masons of the Middle Ages were the intermediaries in passing on signs, tokens and symbols which have come down to the modern society. X

That the symbolism of Masonry, as now preserved, was inherited from very different ancestors, and that the working masons never came into the line of transmission at all, is a contention supported by very learned members of the Craft, and among them was the late Albert Pike, from whose letters to myself I extract the following: X

ALBERT PIKE TO R. F. GOULD.

“It is very certain that, at an early day, there were in England, as well as on this Continent, some men, perhaps many, who devoted their time to the study of that religious philosophy known by the different names of Hermeticism, Rosicrucianism, and Alchemy,—the last being only pretendedly the ‘science’ of practical Alchemy, but using the terms of science to conceal the Rosicrucian and Hermetic Dogma. Several of the symbols used by these philosophers to express their doctrines are now in the keeping of Masonry, notably the Compasses and the Square. X

“Many things combine to prove that the symbols had other meanings for the few than those which they had for the many—the attractions which the Degrees had for men of high rank, the Preface to the Book of ‘Long Livers,’ the real meaning of the Substitute for the Master’s Word, the Sun, Moon, and Master of the Lodge as its Lights, the 47th Problem, which is not a symbol of any moral truth: and the expression in the Regius Manuscript that ‘Gemetry’ took the name of Masonry. These are strengthened by the traditional connection of Pythagoras with Masonry, and by the charge to keep the secrets ‘of the Chamber.’ X

“I think that the Philosophers, becoming Free-Masons, introduced into Masonry its Symbolism.—Secret, except among themselves,—in the Middle Ages, and not after the decline of Operative Masonry began.” (Nov. 8th, 1889). X

“I find in the Blue Degrees certain Symbols that were used a hundred years or more by the Hermetic writers, before the so-called revival of Freemasonry in England.” X

“There is no *proof* that the unlettered day-labouring Masons who had formed themselves into Lodges here and there, and came together periodically, or occasionally in inns or ale-houses, for sociability and to smoke their pipes and drink ale, had and used any of these Symbols at all. To men of that class no Symbol of any recondite or valuable truth, religious or philosophical, could speak intelligibly, or have any other than a trite and vulgar common-place meaning, or be of much greater dignity than the bush over the door of a wine-shop, or a barber’s pole. X

“The Symbols that I have spoken of as Hermetic may have been *borrowed* by Hermeticism; but all the same, it *had* them: and I do not know where they were used outside of Hermeticism, until they appeared in Masonry. To one who knows what working masons were, one or two hundred years ago, it is not necessary to argue that men of that class could not originate these symbols. X +

Did the architects have them? As architects, no. Architecture is not a science of Symbolism, and does not use Symbols. If it had any, it was for the purpose only of using the *figures* in its work. The architect, if peradventure, there were any who used these symbols, putting them to philosophical and religious uses, using them as philosophers, and not as architects,—as philosophers of some sort who happened to be Architects. X X

Whoever endowed Masonry with these particular Symbols, they were Hermetic Symbols; and I know what they meant to the Hermetic writers, French, German, and English. I should think it most likely that Ashmole became a Mason, because others who were Hermeticists had become Masons before him.” (Feb. 7th, 1890). X +

“Ashmole had some inducement that led him to seek admission into Masonry,—some object to attain, some purpose to carry out. Even his utter silence as to the objects, nature, customs and work of the Institution is significant. There was something

in the Institution, that made it seem to him worth his while to join it : and what was in it then may have been in it centuries before." (July 22nd, 1889).

For a full explanation of what may be called in general terms, "the Rosicrucian Theory with regard to Freemasonry," the works and fugitive writings of a vast number of persons would have to be consulted. I have myself treated the subject at considerable length in my *History of Freemasonry* (chap. XIII.), where the leading references will be found collected ; and very masterly papers entitled "Freemasonry and Hermeticism" by the Rev. A. F. A. Woodford, and "Rosicrucians, their History and Aims" (by Bro. W. Wynn Westcott) have been read before the Lodge of the Quatuor Coronati (*A.Q.C.*, i. 28 ; vii. 36). Also I must not forget to mention that at the hands of German writers, a Rosicrucian theory of Masonic origin or development, has passed through quite a multitude of phases, and is still stoutly upheld by brethren of "light and leading" in the Fatherland.

Not, however, to take up too much space, with what, after all, is merely introductory to a study of Bro. Speth's paper, I shall quote from no further commentator on the history—legendary or otherwise—of the Rosicrucians, and proceed at once to indicate the "points" dwelt upon by Albert Pike, which are material to the inquiry we are about to pursue. It will be seen that he claims (1) for the Hermetic philosophers, a *prior* possession of much of the Symbolism now the property of the Freemasons ; and (2) that he refuses to believe in the possession at any time by the working Masons of any symbols of the same class.

To the first contention, it has been replied, that the Hermeticists or Rosicrucians are not known to have practised themselves any mystic or symbolical ceremonies which they could have passed on to the Freemasons (*A.Q.C.* 111. 22); and with respect to the second, let us now examine how far it remains unshattered after the publication of the counter-theory of Bro. Speth. But before doing this, I shall transcribe a few words from one of our Bro. Crawley's latest essays, which seem to offer themselves properly in this place :—"The fact that Ashmole, being a Freemason, was also a Mystic has given rise to the theory that he may have formed a link between the Rosicrucians and the Freemasons. *This theory rests on a series of postulates, and may be passed over till proofs are forthcoming.*" (*A.Q.C.* XI. 5.)

The principle laid down is a sound one, and what the writer of the essay has laid down as a rule of action to be observed with respect to the claims of the Rosicrucians, will equally hold good when applied to the claims of the Freemasons.

[ABRIDGED FROM "A TENTATIVE ENQUIRY," BY BRO. G. W. SPETH.]

The cathedral (or church) builders were a separate class from the masons of the City guilds or companies.

The Manuscript Constitutions belonged to the church-building masons.

The Accepted Masons derived from the church builders, rather than from the guild masons.

The church builders were one fraternity, co-extensive with England at least, even if they did not at first include Scotland and Ireland also.

A mason travelling from, say, York to Canterbury, was immediately recognised and treated as a fellow, a co-member of the fraternity. If his indenture existed in writing, which is doubtful, it might be miles away, so he had means to establish not only that he was at one time an apprentice to the craft, but also that he had served his full time, and had been passed a master of the craft. This he was enabled to do by secret grips, tokens, and signs. There were two degrees, those of Apprentice and Fellow Craft, and a ceremony of some sort took place when each of them was conferred.—(*A.Q.C.*, x. 16 *et seqq.*)

This state of affairs, in the opinion of Bro. Speth, predated any known guild of masons in the Kingdom, and I think I shall be justified in assuming that the chief authority upon which he relies for the maintenance of his theory as a whole, is the final portion of the Matthew Cooke MS. (*Addl. MS.*, 23, 198, *Brit. Mus. Lib.*), as dating "in its transcription though not in its origin, from about A.D. 1400," and the evidential value of this document will form the subject of our next study.

III.

We see on our shelves, in handsome Volumes, the Works of old Authors who lived and wrote before the invention of printing ; but how few of us ask ourselves the questions : Where are the originals of which these books are the copies ? And what authority have we for the genuineness of the text. ?—WILLIAM FORSYTH.

I see no answer to the argument, that one has no right to pick out of an obviously unhistorical statement the assertions which happen to be probable, and to discard the rest.—
T. H. HUXLEY.

The Manuscript Constitutions are supposed to contain the codes of regulations *in use* among the church builders of the Middle Ages, but they are not referred to in any way by the writers of that period, nor do we meet with any independent testimony with respect to them until the 17th century was well advanced, or, in other words, until long after the publication of the *Fama Fraternalitatis*, with which is ordinarily associated the development of the Rosicrucian mania, which set in about A.D. 1610—14.

"A large *parchment volume*, containing the *History and Rules of the Craft of Masonry*," is mentioned by Dr. Plot in the "Natural History of Staffordshire," 1686, but a criticism of his "Account of the Freemasons" as there related, lies beyond the scope of my present purpose. The points on which I wish to dwell at the present stage are (1) That the Manuscript Constitutions of the Masonic Fraternity, are nowhere referred to in any independent testimony of prior date to the appearance on the scene of those hermetical philosophers referred to by Albert Pike, and the "conveyance" of whose "Symbols" into Freemasonry constitutes the "Rosicrucian theory," of which there are so many supporters, and among them Dr. Begemann, one of the most profound Masonic scholars of this or any other age. X

But to return to the Manuscript Constitutions, there is nothing to show that either in the sixteenth or the fifteenth centuries, or earlier, the codes of regulations contained in these venerable documents fulfilled any more useful purpose than the several versions of the "Legend of the Craft," of which, in all copies of the M.C. they form a part.

Our accounts of these codes of regulations are, indeed, only traditionary, and we cannot trust those echoes of the past, which are called the early "History" or written traditions of the Freemasons. *Unless machinery is seen at work it is not possible to judge of its results.* Equally hard is it to form a judgment of the operation of the Masonic system of government in the middle ages, from the dry statements which successive copyists of the Manuscript Constitutions have preserved or invented.

Moreover (to adopt the words of Professor Goldwin Smith) "It is a rule of criticism that we cannot by any critical alembic, extract material for history out of fable. If the details of the story are fabulous, so is the whole. Devices for meeting such difficulties may be found, but they are devices and not solutions. So long as anything miraculous is left the difficulty of proof remains" (*Essays*, 56, 108, and 163).

Now it is the essence of the code of regulations on which our Bro. Speth so much relies, that there was an "Assembly" or Masonic parliament which was in full swing from some unknown period down to, and perhaps after, the 15th century.

The masons, according to the "Constitutions," were only obliged to go up to the Assembly when they received any warning. But from whom was the warning to proceed? The meeting, if it took place at all, must have been convened by some person or persons, and who could they have been? In other words, there must have been a sort of head-quarter staff somewhat resembling that of a modern trades-union. Yet we are asked to believe, not only in the existence of so remarkable an organisation, but also to carry our faith to the extreme point of supposing that the legal writers, commentators, annalists, and antiquarians, from Chief Justice Glanvill downwards, together with the vast array of ancient records, have passed over in utter silence, the extraordinary privilege thus enjoyed by the Masons, and possessed by no other trade, which must have been common knowledge while the custom lasted.

It has, indeed, been suggested by Bro. Speth, that instead of there being one General Assembly of Masons for the whole kingdom, there were several, but this supposition would appear to be a very long way the less tenable of the two. It seems to me quite incredible that *one* such Assembly would have been held yearly (or triennially) without some trustworthy record of the circumstance descending to us, and, therefore, the holding of a score of them (let us say) in different parts of the country would, in my judgment, have been at least twenty times as miraculous (if the expression may be allowed to pass) as the alleged custom of meeting in one body, which I have criticised at greater length.

What the Assembly really was, which we find so constantly alluded to in the Manuscript Constitutions, is a question that would involve a protracted study of the legal and judicial procedure of the Middle Ages—but it may be shortly stated, that the unions of the trades and the crafts in towns met in what were styled General, or Common Assemblies, both of which terms occur in the Masonic Constitutions, though the words "Common Assembly" are very unusual and are only to be found in what are called the "Hope"

and "York No. 4" MSS. There is no doubt whatever that to the governing body of the borough, the trade association was a mere matter of public convenience, and was so little regarded as depending on the free will of the craft itself, that it was frequently founded by order of the town and was invariably compelled to make submission to superior force and receive orders from its master the municipality (J. R. Green, *Town Life in the Fifteenth Century*, i. 135). It is not likely that the masons and carpenters should have volunteered to take oath before the Mayor and Aldermen that they would do their duty in their trade (*Lib. cus.* 100); or that the masons should themselves propose that if a mason failed to fulfil his contract, certain men of his trade who acted on his securities should be bound to finish his task. (Riley, *Memorials*, 280-82).

"Men who offended against the rules of the trade were brought before the town officers for punishment. *Even the wandering artizans who moved from place to place, who had no fixed shops and no complete guild organization, found themselves subjected to the town authorities as soon as they had crossed the borders of the borough.*" (Green, i. 151).

The suggestion might therefore be made that the General Assemblies specified in the Manuscript Constitutions were really those of the associated trades in the towns?

But there is another, and as it seems to me a preferable hypothesis. Except in London, certainly down to the time of Edward I., the Sheriff and County Court still reviewed the jurisdiction of the town, and even much later, the supervision of the Sheriff extended over many towns. Also, the clause in the "Constitutions" naming the radius within which attendance at the Assembly was compulsory, would be meaningless, if we can suppose that the "Charge" was addressed solely to residents in the towns.

We are told in the *Mirror of Justices* (A.D. 1285-90):

"The Sheriffs, by ancient ordinance, hold General Assemblies twice a year in each hundred, whither all fee tenants within the hundred are bound to come" (chap. xvi.).

That the masons were not exempt from attendance and service at the Court Leet or the Sheriff's Tourn, when a View of Frankpledge took place is quite clear, and an instance of a special jury consisting of masons and carpenters, in connection with the proceedings of a Court Leet, is given in the IXth Volume of the Historical MS. Commission, p. 169.

To this, of course, it may be replied that the masons in question were not of the church-building class—conceding for the moment, that there *may* have been *two* divisions of the Masons' trade—but if the very abundant evidence on the subject is consulted, and particularly the publications of the Selden Society, many examples will be found where the right of the Bishop (whose authority over the church-building masons might almost be implied) to hold a Court Leet and View of Frankpledge, was disputed by the Town. A case of the kind is cited by the Rev. F. Bloomfield, and, although the Judges of the King's Court decided in favour of the Bishop in 1352, the quarrel was still going on in 1473 (*Topographical History of Norfolk*, iii., 513.).

But the chief point on which I wish to lay stress, is the extreme improbability (to put it no higher) that the masons, at any time, could have had, so to speak, a parliament of their own. There is nothing whatever to point in that direction outside of the Manuscript Constitutions, and, in order that we may obtain a glimpse of what would pass through the mind of any critical historian of the modern school, if he were asked to believe in the existence of such a phenomenon, I shall adduce the following:

"The critic is one who, when he lights on an interesting statement, begins by suspecting it. He remains in suspense until he has subjected his authority to three operations. First, he asks whether he has read the passage as the author wrote it. For the transcriber, and the editor, and the official or officious censor on the top of the editor, have played strange tricks, and have much to answer for. And if they are not to blame, it may turn out that the author wrote his book twice over, that you can discover the first jet, the progressive variations, things added, and things struck out. Next is the question *where the writer got his information. If from a previous writer it can be ascertained, and the inquiry has to be repeated. If from unpublished papers, they must be traced, and when the fountain head is reached, or the track disappears, the question of veracity arises. The responsible writer's character, his position, antecedents, and probable motives have to be examined into, and this is what, in a different and adopted sense of the word, may be called the 'higher criticism,' in comparison with the servile and often mechanical work of pursuing statements to their root. For a historian has to be treated as a witness, and not believed unless his sincerity is established.*" (Lord Acton, *Lecture on the Study of History*, 40-42).

Now the "question of veracity," will of necessity arise, in connection with the authorship or transcription of the Cooke MS., but beyond the fact that this manuscript "History" was the production of some unknown fabulist, there is nothing to disclose.

To use the words of a great philosopher, "If we read a book which contains incredible or impossible narratives, or is written in a very obscure style, *and if we know nothing of its author, nor of the time or occasion of its being written*, we shall vainly endeavour to gain any certain knowledge of its true meaning" (Spinoza, *Works*.—Bohn's *Philos. Lib.*—i., 111).

I must not forget to state that the legendary narrative and the code of regulations in the Cooke and other MSS. are supposed to stand on very distinct footings, the former being regarded as delusive fable, and the latter as accredited history. I do not profess to see this point in the same strength as some see it, or I might even say that in my judgment the foundations of the "code," as well as those of the "narrative," have been built on legendary quicksands (*A.Q.C.*, v. 219, vi. 184), but since our Bro. Speth has laid great stress upon it in his remarks on the "Assembly" (*Ibid* vi., 189), it is right that I should set it before the readers of this article.

A rule, however, which it would seem in every respect most desirable to follow, has been strictly laid down by one of the most eminent of all the students who are to-day investigating the history and sources of early Christian literature: "None but *firmly established historical facts or doings* can be allowed as evidence of the existence of any *legal ordinance* they may imply." (Prof. A. Kuenen, *An Historico-Critical Inquiry into the Origin and Composition of the Hexateuch*, tr. by P. H. Wickstead, 179).

I shall next ask all who have favoured me with their attention thus far, to cast a backward glance at the contention which has been presented to them in the language of Albert Pike,—after which I shall enquire whether there is any *proof* that the English working masons of the fourteenth century recognised one another by means of signs and tokens, or, in other words, if there is any more positive evidence to support such a conclusion, than has been advanced in favour of the theory that the symbolism of Masonry was brought into it by the Rosicrucians?

If, indeed, the *litterati* of the Craft differ very essentially, as they unquestionably do, about the details of Modern, how can they be expected to agree with respect to those of Ancient Masonry? Also, if they differ about *facts*, is it conceivable that they can arrive at any definite agreement in regard to conjectures? Then, again, is it within the limits of possibility to discriminate between what is legitimate conjecture, and what is not? To a great many persons, apart from any predilection they may entertain for one theory of Masonic descent over another, the story of Christian Rosenkreutz as related in the *Fama Fraternalitatis*, will seem far less violently improbable than the Legend of the Craft (with the "Charges" thrown in), as recounted in the various copies of the "Constitutions."

Still, as it has been finely observed: "The rise of new difficulties is as essential to the progress of truth as the removal of old puzzles." (T. K. Cheyne, *Founders of Old Testament Criticism*, 127.) The *Tentative Enquiry*, which has been launched with such remarkable force by our Bro. Speth, seems to me to have come to stay. But the last word has not been spoken on the subject, and no one probably feels a stronger conviction than the writer of that paper, that he has lifted only a little corner of the veil.

Albert Pike tells us—"No man can find any evidence that, before 1723, the Ancient Craft Masonry had any symbols at all. At the beginning of its rebuilding in England, its whole foundation was a rubble-work of fictions as absurd as the story of Jack the Giant Killer. Most of this has been got out and cast away; but some remains in its place yet, and is very dear to those whose faith is large enough to remove mountains. There is a leaning now, likely to become stronger, to replace the old rubble-work of fiction and fable, by building presumptions on suppositions, and from the presumptions inferring facts" (*Official Bulletin, Sup. Counc. S.J.*, x. App. 14).

I have endeavoured to show cause why it is permissible to differ from Bro. Speth with respect to many of his "suppositions," but there is a "presumption," and, indeed, the most material of the whole number, that I think may be accepted as one of the several possible explanations of the problem which he set himself to attack.

That the "Free" Masons were free *from*, and not *of*, something with regard to which the converse holds good in the case of other Masons, is a theory which I hope may be still further developed by its author who, I trust, will regard it as a greater compliment to be asked to continue the interesting study upon which he has so far advanced, than to have suggested to him that he should rest from his labours, under the highly mistaken idea that the effect of the verdict of the "English Dictionary" has been to transmute an ingenious hypothesis into a fact.

Since the above was in type, I have become aware that in the observations with which Dr. Chetwode Crawley accompanied his excerpt from the Oxford *English Dictionary*,

he studiously confined himself to its *philological* (without, as erroneously printed in his letter of August 13th, concerning himself in any way about its *philosophical*) bearing. I have reason to believe that he has personal knowledge of the nature and extent of the learned Editors' philological researches on the points reviewed in this article. Therefore, when writing of their "exhaustive survey of the whole ground," the context of his letter shows that he refers only to the philological aspect, and that he does not claim for them any further survey. But what I trust to have already shown in the course of these remarks is, that a survey thus limited cannot properly be called "exhaustive," and that any conclusion deduced from it cannot be "authoritative."

After all, how shifting and uncertain is the result of modern research—"We see through a glass darkly. The past is an enigma. The voices of the dead are faint and distant. History will not become a branch of positive science till the secrets of all hearts are loosed, till at eventide it is light." (John Skelton, *Nugae Criticae*, 145).

To those of my fellow-students, therefore, who are interested in the problem of "Free" and "Freemason," let me conclude by saying—in the words of the Genius to the Hermit of Bassora—"If you wish for the solution, be patient, and wait."

POSTSCRIPT.

In reply to fraternal inquiries, let me state: (1) that the earliest use of the English word *freemason* (at present known to us) is associated with the freedom of a London Company (1376), and it is from a similar (or in part identical) class of persons, and not from the Masons who worked free stone, that I imagine the existing term *freemason* to have been inherited; (2) that by the second patent granted to William of Wykeham (as recorded by Ashmole), he was to provide, carpenters, masons, and other artificers, also to *hold leet and other courts*, and to enquire of the King's liberties, rights, and all things appertaining thereto—a condition of affairs which, coupled with the existence of a pledge-day (*plegh dai*) in connection with the workmen of York Minster, it will be hard to reconcile with the theory that any class or division of Masons was exempt from the operation of the ordinary laws; and (3) that a summary of my views on the character of the General Assembly referred to in the Manuscript Constitutions will be found in Vol. V. of the *Transactions* of the Quatuor Coronati Lodge, p. 202.

X.

FORTITUDE AND OLD CUMBERLAND
LODGE, No. 12.

INSTALLATION MEETING.

ADDRESS ON "THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE LODGE"

FORTITUDE AND OLD CUMBERLAND LODGE, No. 12.

Installation Meeting, March 5th, 1900.

ADDRESS ON "THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE LODGE."

The W.M. called upon Bro. R. F. Gould, P.G.D., who delivered the following address :—

"Worshipful Master and Brethren,—In the foundation of the Grand Lodge of England—the mother of Grand Lodges—Four Lodges were concerned. One of these is dead, and three survive; but only two are shown in the official Calendar as possessing a higher antiquity than the Grand Lodge which they helped to create. The two Lodges so described are the Antiquity, No. 2, and the Royal Somerset House and Inverness, No. 4. The third lodge, still existing, which was also a founder of the earliest of Grand Lodges, on St. John's Day (in summer), 1717, is composed of the brethren whom it is now my privilege to address, and the circumstances under which, what is now the Fortitude and Old Cumberland, No. 12, occupies a position on the roll altogether incompatible with its undoubted antiquity, it will be my business this evening to relate. Let me, however, commence by saying that a statement of facts, and by no means a series of conjectures, it is my purpose to lay before you. It may, and no doubt will, occur to your minds, as the narrative is unfolded, that while present No. 12, during its chequered career, has had on more than one occasion to face

"The sling and arrows of outrageous fortune."

Nevertheless her misfortunes being wholly undeserved, ought not, therefore, to be regarded as irreparable. But, in the first place, I am disposed myself to regard the position of any lodge on the roll as a matter of very minor importance; and in the second, I am of opinion that an uninterrupted descent from the old lodge which met at the Apple Tree Tavern in 1717, is of itself such a distinction as not only to counter-balance, but to far outweigh any feelings of mortification you may have inherited from your direct Masonic ancestors, owing to the very arbitrary and unjust manner in which your lodge was deprived of its precedency in the Engraved Lists. The story I have to tell you will not be a long one, and I shall now proceed to relate it with all the clearness and conciseness I can command. I have already mentioned that the era of Grand Lodges dates from 1717. Before that period, whatever lodges there were, met by virtue of what is the fashion to term "Inherent Right." In 1716 (or possibly during the first quarter of 1717), Four London lodges met respectively :

- Original No. 1 (now Antiquity) at the Goose and Gridiron Ale-house, in St. Paul's Church-yard.
- " " 2 (now extinct) at the Crown Ale-house, in Parker's Lane, near Drury Lane.
- " " 3 (now Fortitude and Old Cumberland) at the Apple Tree Tavern, in Charles Street, Covent Garden.
- " " 4 (now Royal Somerset House and Inverness) at the Rummer and Grapes Tavern, in Channel Row, Westminster.

These four Lodges assembled at the Apple Tree Tavern, under the banner of Original No. 3 (now Fortitude and Old Cumberland), and constituted themselves a Grand Lodge. On the 24th of June, 1717, they took a further step, and meeting on this occasion at the Goose and Gridiron, the Masonic home of Original No. 1, elected as First Grand Master of Masons, "Mr. Anthony Sayer, Gentleman," a member of Original No. 3. It will be seen, therefore, that the first Grand Lodge was constituted at the place of meeting, and presumably at the instance of Original No. 3; also, that the first Grand Master of Masons was chosen from the same Lodge. Anthony Sayer was succeeded by George Payne of Original No. 4 (now Royal Somerset House and Inverness), and the latter by Dr. J. T. Desaguliers, the learned natural philosopher, also a member of Original No. 4; after whom George Payne enjoyed a second term of office, and was followed on Lady-day, 1721, by John, Duke of Montagu, the first of a long and unbroken series of Noble Grand Masters.

The next event I have to record, had a very important bearing upon the subsequent fortunes of Original No. 3. In February, 1723, the lodge moved from the Apple Tree Tavern to the Queen's Head, in Knave's Acre, and on this occasion the members came under a new "constitution," though they needed it not. In other words, instead of continuing to work, like the remainder of the Four Old or Original Lodges, by virtue alone of its Time Immemorial antiquity, it voluntarily accepted, what corresponds in these days with a warrant, but is best described, having regard to the customs prevailing in 1723, as an authorisation of its "Regularity" by the Grand Master. Certain consequences resulted from this act, as the sequel will disclose, and, in the meantime, it will be convenient to remark that with the exception of Anthony Sayer, the Premier Grand Master, who is cited on the roll of No. 3, all the eminent persons who took any leading part in the early history of Freemasonry, immediately after the formation of a Grand Lodge, were members of No. 4. In 1724, No. 1 had twenty-two members; No. 2, twenty-one; No. 3, fourteen; and No. 4, seventy-one. The three senior lodges possessed among them no member of sufficient rank to be described as "Esquire"; while in No. 4, there were 10 noblemen, three honourables, four baronets or knights, two general officers, ten colonels, four officers below field rank, and twenty-four esquires. Payne and Desaguliers—former Grand Masters—together with the Rev. James Anderson (afterwards D.D.)—the "Father of Masonic History"—were members of this lodge.

The lodges at this period were described by the Signs of the Houses where they met, and in the earliest Engraved List, nominally for 1723, but really for 1724, the Goose and Gridiron—Original No. 1—takes the first place; then comes the Queen's Head, Knave's Acre—Original No. 3; the Queen's Head, Turn Stile (formerly the Crown)—Original No. 2; the Cheshire Cheese (of which nothing is known); and in the fifth place, or niche, the Horn (formerly the Rummer and Grapes)—Original No. 4. The same precedency was given to the Four Old (or Original) Lodges in the List for 1725, and as the Cheshire Cheese had then "dropped out," there was a vacant space in the Calendar between the third and the fifth places on the roll. From that date until 1728 the first four positions on the official list were occupied by the founders of the Grand Lodge, the three senior lodges taking the same places as in 1724 and 1725; but the Horn filling the fourth instead of the fifth niche, as it had previously done prior to the disappearance of the Lodge at the Cheshire Cheese.

On December 27th, 1727, it was resolved by the Grand Lodge that a Committee, consisting of the succeeding Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, and Grand Wardens, should inquire into the precedency of the several lodges; and accordingly when the lodges were arranged in order of seniority in 1729, Original No. 3, instead of being placed as one of the Four at the head of the Roll, found itself relegated by the Committee of Procedure to the eleventh number on the list. This took the members by surprise, considering that the last time the four were all represented at Grand Lodge—April 19th, 1727—before the scale of precedence was adjusted in conformity with the regulations enacted for that purpose, their respective Master and Wardens answered to their names in the same order of seniority as we find to have prevailed when the first Book of Constitutions was approved by the representatives of the lodges in 1723, that is to say, the present Lodge of Antiquity, as No. 1, the Crown (now extinct), as No. 2; present Fortitude and Old Cumberland, as No. 3, and present Somerset House and Inverness, as No. 4. But although, to quote from the actual minutes of Grand Lodge, July 11th, 1729, "The officers of the Lodge at the Queen's Head, Knave's Acre, represented that their lodge was misplaced in the printed book whereby they lost their rank, and humbly prayed that the said mistake might be regulated. Bro. Choche [or "Choke," Deputy Grand Master], acquainted the Grand Lodge that the several lodges stood in the list according to the date of their Constitution." The record goes on to say, "The said complaint was dismissed."

We have here arrived at a very interesting stage in the career of the lodge, a fragment of whose early history I am laying before its present members. But a great many points on which a variety of arguments might be presented, both on the one side and on the other, will be best left to the speculative antiquary, as being of no practical importance at the present date. From an academical point of view, the gradual supersession of the Operative by the Speculative (or Symbolic) Masons and the paramount position in the Craft attained by Original No. 4, offer very tempting themes. But I shall content myself with observing that if, instead of being merely a coterie of Grand Officers, consisting of the Grand Master, his Deputy, and the Grand Wardens (two of whom, the Deputy Grand Master, Alexander Choke, and the Senior Grand Warden, Nathaniel Blackerby, who succeeded Choke as Deputy, and presided in Grand Lodge on July 11th, 1729, were members of No. 4), the three senior

lodges had been represented on the Committee of Precedence, it is not credible for an instant that the just claim of the old lodge at the Queen's Head, Knave's Acre, to retain the rank which the members had clearly brought with them on their removal from the Apple Tree Tavern, would have been so contemptuously disregarded. Moreover, if we look upon the matter as being virtually a struggle for priority between what are now Fortitude and Old Cumberland, and Somerset House and Inverness respectively, to be determined by a tribunal which was controlled by members of the *junior* lodge, the result might well have been anticipated. Of the Deputy Grand Master and Senior Grand Warden, who belonged to No. 4, it might have been confidently predicted that—to quote and adopt the expressive language of Swift, though used by the Dean in quite a different connection—"They will be sure to decide in favour of themselves, and to talk much of their inherent right." But this evening I am mainly concerned in placing before you, in a small compass, a narrative of events, and will therefore only make the passing observation before going on with my story, that whatever privileges were inherent in or to Original No. 3 when it met at the Apple Tree in 1717, it undoubtedly retained on the occasion of the members altering their place of meeting in 1723.

There are numerous incidents on which I should like to dwell; but I pass to the 29th January, 1730, on which date Viscount Kingston was succeeded as Grand Master by the Duke of Norfolk. The whole of the former Grand Masters, with the exception of the Duke of Wharton, were present at this festival, and they entered the lodge room in order of juniority. Lord Colerane walked at the head of the procession, then followed the Earl of Inchiquin, Lord Paisley, the Duke of Richmond, the Earl of Dalkeith, the Duke of Montagu, Dr. Desaguliers, George Payne, Esq., and last of all, in the position of honour as the first Grand Master of Masons that ever existed, "Mr. Anthony Sayer," who was still a Member of the old Lodge which had been removed from the Apple Tree to the Queen's Head in 1723.

About the year 1736 Original No. 2, formerly at the Crown (1717), was dropped from the roll, and the lodges immediately below it each went up a step, Original No. 3 moving from the 11th to the 10th place on the list. This lodge—or it will be clearer if I say to our hosts to night, *your lodge*—is next referred to by Dr. Anderson, who has been called the "Father of Masonic History," in his *Book of Constitutions*, published in 1738. This work contains the only account we possess of the proceedings of the Four Old Lodges, with respect to the formation of a Grand Lodge. The manuscript having been reviewed and corrected by many Past Grand Officers, was ordered to be printed "with their approbation" by the Earl of Darnley, and the other Grand Officers for 1737; and was published with the "sanction and recommendation" of the Marquis of Caernarvon, Grand Master, and the other Grand Officers for 1738. Here we have, then, not merely an account of historical facts, of which no other description exists, but an absolutely conclusive testimony to the good faith of the compiler, in the approval and recommendation of his book by the Grand Master and Grand Officers for 1737 and 1738. In this work a list is given of the lodges in and about London and Westminster, and at the number 10 we meet with the following:—"QUEEN'S HEAD in *Knave's Acre*. This was one of the *four Lodges* mentioned page 109, *viz.*, the APPLE TREE, Tavern in *Charles Street, Covent Garden*, whose *Constitution* is immemorial: But after they removed to the *QUEEN'S Head*, upon some Difference, the Members that met there came under a *new Constitution*, tho' they wanted it not, and it is therefore placed at this Number." Now I am going to put it to you, that the statements of students of history—Masonic or otherwise—like those of advocates in Courts of Law, are only to be relied upon so far as they can be sustained by evidence. My own statement that there has been no break of continuity in your career as a lodge, from 1717 down to the present date, has already been laid before you, and I next come to the proof, by which I mean the actual evidence, bearing on the circumstances which took place when Original No. 3 was removed from the Apple Tree to the Queen's Head in 1723. Dr. Anderson tells us in the plainest terms that the Masonic ancestors of your present lodge were members of one of the Four Old, or Original Lodges, which founded the Grand Lodge, and he goes on to say, "Whose *Constitution is (nec was) immemorial*," and he explains the loss of their rank (while retaining their unbroken descent from the lodge at the Apple Tree) by the remark—"the members came under a new Constitution, tho' they wanted it not." What do these words mean? In my own opinion, they signify beyond the shadow of a doubt, first of all, that the constitution of the lodge in 1738 was regarded by Dr. Anderson as being an Immemorial one; also, that the members of Original No. 3 required in 1723 no

further authority than that which they already possessed ; and that in consequence a new constitution was wholly unneeded.

The point, however, for our consideration to-night has nothing whatever to do with the ancient privileges of the lodge. It is the simple question of its antiquity. If, instead of accepting *one* new Constitution, it had accepted *fifty*, this would have involved no break in the continuity of its existence as a lodge. Now, unless words are to be divested of their real meaning, there would seem to me no other possible interpretation to be placed on the entry in the "Constitutions" for 1738—than that in the opinion of the highest (and only) authority on the early status of the Four Old Lodges—, the Lodge No. 10 in 1738 (present No. 12), was the lineal descendant, without a break, of the old lodge which met at the Apple Tree in 1717. In other words, instead of being merely an early, but yet Modern lodge created by the Grand Lodge, it is as truly at the present day a descendant of Original No. 3, as are Antiquity and Somerset House of Original Nos. 1 and 4, and is equally with them one of the Time Immemorial lodges to which the Grand Lodge owes its existence. No. 10 afterwards met at the Fish and Bell, Charles-street, Soho-square, for many years, and during its stay there an event occurred, which is thus related in the minute book of the George Lodge, No. 4, *now* the Lodge of Friendship, No. 6: "July 22, 1755—" Letter being [read] from the Grand Secy.: Citing us to appear att the Committee of Charity to answer the Fish and Bell Lodge [No. 10] to their demand of being plac'd prior to us, viz., in No. 3 Whereon our R, Wors' Mas' attended & the Question being put to Ballot was carr' in favour of us." But, although this renewed protest against its loss of rank was again unsuccessful, the officers of No. 10 appear to have satisfied the Committee that their lodge was entitled to a higher number than would fall to it in the ordinary course, from two of its seniors having "dropped out" since the last revision of the list in 1740. Instead, therefore, of becoming No. 8, we find that it passed over the heads of two then existing lodges immediately above it, and appeared in the *sixth* place in the list for 1756. More than twenty years ago I observed in a little work which has long since been forgotten: "The supersession of Original No. 3 by *eight* junior lodges in 1729, together with its partial restoration of rank in 1756, has introduced so much confusion into the history of this Lodge that, *for upwards of a century*, its identity with the 'Old Lodge,' which met at the Apple Tree Tavern in 1717, appears to have been wholly lost sight of."

Of the meeting of the Four Old Lodges on St. John the Baptist's Day, 1717, a famous writer observes: "This day is celebrated by all German Lodges as the day of the Anniversary of the Society of Freemasons. It is the high-noon of the year, the day of light and roses, and it ought to be celebrated everywhere." It seems to me that not only is the most momentous event in the history of the Craft worthy of annual commemoration, but that it is (or should be) the duty of the three surviving lodges who founded the earliest of Grand Lodges, to unite together for the purpose of carrying the idea of such celebration into effect.

All Four of the Time Immemorial lodges have had their mutations of fortune. Antiquity seceded, became a Grand Lodge, and eventually returned to the fold. Original No. 2 is dead. Fortitude and Old Cumberland has lost its rank ; and the Royal Somerset House and Inverness was erased from, but after a lapse of a few years restored to the roll. Nevertheless, the three lodges which survive, even if they were at the bottom of the list of lodges instead of where they are, would always have connected with them associations which belong to no other lodge, so that if they have not priority of rank they stand in priority of estimation over all other lodges. It is somewhat remarkable that no histories of these lodges have been written. But the fame of "Old Antiquity," the vicissitudes of Fortitude and Old Cumberland, and the galaxy of worthies who were members of Somerset House and Inverness, may yet, let us hope, serve as founts of inspiration from which future chroniclers may draw freely, and as freely record in lodge histories the eminent services rendered to Freemasonry by previous generations of distinguished Craftsmen, whose names adorn the rolls of either of the three still surviving lodges of Immemorial Antiquity ; or, to vary the expression, the three living English lodges, of whose existence "the memory of man runneth not to the contrary." One such chronicler, in the person of Bro. W. H. Rylands (who hoped to be with us this evening), has, I am glad to say, undertaken to write a history of the Lodge of Antiquity. Somerset House and Inverness will, I doubt not, at the proper psychological moment, depute some competent brother to compile a record of its proceedings ; and lastly I come to yourselves, the members of the Lodge I am now addressing. Your lodge, during its long span of life, since the dawn of accredited Masonic history (and for what period it was in existence before the era of the Grand Lodge it helped

to found, cannot be determined), has, indeed, undergone vicissitudes of fortune, but there are glorious associations connected with its career of which nothing can deprive you. These I think it is your bounden duty to place on record for the benefit and information of the present members, as well as of those who may come after them. The members of Fortitude and Old Cumberland may take a legitimate pride in the reflection, that their lodge was one of the Four that called into being the earliest of Grand Lodges ; that the Grand Lodge of England was constituted under the banner of their lodge ; that the first Grand Master of Masons was one of their own members ; that the lodge has preserved an uninterrupted continuity of existence from 1717 until the present day ; and that of the three living lodges who now share the glory of having founded and established the Premier Grand Lodge of the world, it is the only one of them which has never ceased for a single instant to occupy a place on her roll."

XI.

TIME IMMEMORIAL LODGES.

[*Freemason*, May 5th, June 2nd, 16th, and 30th, 1900.]

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My friend Bro. Hughan, in a recent number of the *Freemason*, observes with regard to the early history of the "Fortitude and Old Cumberland" Lodge, No. 12—"I cannot, however, follow Bro. Gould in his statement that 'of these three living lodges who now share the glory of having founded and established the Premier Grand Lodge of the world, it is the only one of them which has never ceased for a single instant to occupy a place on her roll.' The "Lodge of Antiquity" has never been off the roll any more than the *original No. 3*, now No. 12. The majority of its members left the Grand Lodge 1779-89; but the minority remained, and not only continued as a lodge, but duly made the requisite payments to 'Charity' and 'Hall' Funds during that period."

William Preston, the famous author of the "Illustrations of Masonry"—one of the "majority" on the above occasion—has written at great length on the unhappy difference between the Grand Lodge and the "Lodge of Antiquity." With these writings most students of the Craft are familiar, but among the readers of the *Freemason* there are probably many to whom the argument of the greatest Masonic writer of his time, on the inherent rights of the Four Old Lodges, will be new—which must serve as my excuse for proceeding with a summary of it in the present article.

I shall not, however, quote from the editions of the "Illustrations of Masonry" which appeared while the members of the "Lodge of Antiquity" were divided in sentiment and allegiance, but from those published *after* the happy reunion of the brethren of the premier English Lodge, in 1790.

"An unfortunate dispute," says Preston, "having arisen among the members of the Lodge of Antiquity, the complaint was introduced into the Grand Lodge. ∴ ∴ Another circumstance tended still further to widen this breach. The Lodge of Antiquity having expelled three of its members for misbehaviour, the Grand Lodge interfered, and, as was thought, without proper investigation, ordered them to be reinstated. With this order the lodge refused to comply, the members conceiving themselves competent and sole judges in the choice of their own private members. The privileges of the Lodge of Antiquity, acting by immemorial constitution, began to be set up, in opposition to the supposed uncontrollable authority of the Grand Lodge established by themselves in 1717; and in the investigation of this point the original cause of the dispute was totally forgotten. At last a rupture ensued. The Lodge of Antiquity, on one hand, notified its separation from the Grand Lodge, and avowed an alliance with the Grand Lodge of All England, held in the city of York, and every lodge and Mason who wished to act in conformity to the original constitutions.

The Grand Lodge, on the other hand, enforced its edicts, and extended its protection to the few brethren whose cause it had espoused, by permitting them to assemble as a regular lodge, without any warrant, under the denomination of the Lodge of Antiquity itself, and suffering them to appear by their representatives at the Grand Lodge as the real Lodge of Antiquity, from which they had been excluded, and which still continued to act by its own immemorial constitution. This produced a schism, which lasted for the space of 10 years. To justify the proceedings of the Grand Lodge, the following resolution of the Committee of Charity, held in February, 1779, was printed and dispersed among the lodges:—

"*Resolved*—That every private lodge derives its authority from the Grand Lodge, and that no authority but the Grand Lodge can withdraw or take away that power. That, though the majority of a lodge may determine to quit the Society, the constitution, or power of assembling, remains with, and is vested in, the rest of the members, who may be desirous of continuing their allegiance; and that, if all the members withdraw themselves, the constitution is extinct, and the authority reverts to the Grand Lodge."

This resolution, it was argued, might operate with respect to any lodge which derived its constitution from the Grand Lodge, but could not apply to one which derived its authority from another channel, long before the establishment of the Grand Lodge, and which authority had never been superseded, but repeatedly admitted and acknowledged.

Had it appeared upon record that, after the establishment of the Grand Lodge, this original authority had been surrendered, forfeited or exchanged for a warrant from the Grand Lodge, the Lodge of Antiquity must have admitted the resolution of the Grand Lodge in its full force; but as no such circumstance appeared on record, the members of the Lodge of Antiquity were justified in considering their immemorial constitution sacred, while they chose to exist as a lodge, and act in obedience to the ancient Constitutions.

The words in italics were aimed at the three other Time Immemorial Lodges, which assisted in the formation of the Grand Lodge. This will be rendered clearer by an examination of the "Manifesto of the Right Worshipful Lodge of Antiquity, 1778," a portion of which I reproduce:—

"And whereas, at this present time, there only remains one of the said four original lodges—the old Lodge of St. Paul, or, as it is now emphatically styled, the Lodge of Antiquity. Two of the said four ancient Lodges having been extinct many years [Original Nos. 2 and 3—the latter being present Fortitude and Old Cumberland, No. 12], and the Master of the other of them [Original No. 4—present Royal Somerset House and Inverness, No. 4] having, on the part of his lodge, in open Grand Lodge, relinquished all such inherent rights and privileges which, as a private lodge acting by an immemorial Constitution it enjoyed."

It is worthy of remark that, in the opinion of William Preston, as expressed in the "Illustrations of Masonry," 1792 (and in subsequent editions), there was a surrender of its ancient (or inherent) rights on the part of original No. 3 (Fortitude and Old Cumberland), as well as on that of Original No. 4 (Royal Somerset House and Inverness). He observes, "The Old Lodge No. 3, in February, 1722-3, was removed to the Queen's Head, in Knave's Acre, on account of some difference among its members, and the members who met there came under a *new* Constitution; though, says the 'Book of Constitutions,' *they wanted it not*, and ranked as No. 10 in the list. Thus they inconsiderately renounced their former rank under an Immemorial Constitution."

But he goes on to say, and in a very different frame of mind from that in which he penned those controversial writings, the "State of Facts," and the "Manifesto":—

"It is a question that will admit of some discussion, whether any of the above old lodges [*i.e.*, *The Four*] can, while they exist as lodges, surrender their rights: as those rights seem to have been granted by the old Masons of the Metropolis to them in trust: and any individual member of the four old lodges might object to the surrender, and in that case they never could be given up."

I have nearly come to the end of my digression—which will now close with a statement of the object with which it has been introduced.

A good many years ago (1878) I commented on the depreciatory language used by Preston in regard to the sister lodges who co-operated with present "Antiquity" in laying the corner stone of our present system of Masonry, in 1717, as "illustrating the absence of cohesion among the Four Old Lodges, who *unitedly* might have preserved their privileges for all time."

The attempt, therefore, which is now being made at the instance of existing No. 12, to arrange for a celebration of the anniversary of the formation of the Grand Lodge of England, by the three surviving lodges which were present at that memorable event, has my heartiest sympathy; and if I have slightly drifted from my main thesis, it has been with a wish to point out how disastrous to our English Time Immemorial Lodges have been the consequences of a want of union in the past, to suggest a fraternal alliance in the present, and to express a confident hope in the efficacy of a "triple tie" as a talisman to avert any further loss of their ancient privileges in the near or remote future.

Returning to the argument of William Preston, "It evidently appears," he observes, "that the resolutions of the Grand Lodge could have no effect on the Lodge of Antiquity,

after the publication of the manifesto which avowed its separation, nor while the members of that Lodge continued to meet regularly as heretofore, and to promote the laudable purposes of Masonry on their old independent foundation. The Lodge of Antiquity, it was asserted, could not be dissolved while the majority of its members kept together, and acted in conformity to the original constitutions, and no edict of the Grand Lodge, or of its Committees, could deprive the members of that Lodge of a right which had been admitted to be vested in themselves, collectively, from time immemorial, a right which had not been derived from, or ever ceded to, any Grand Lodge whatever."

In bringing his remarks to a conclusion, the author of the "Illustrations of Masonry" makes this manly declaration: "Although I have considerably abridged my observations on this unfortunate dispute in the latter editions of this treatise, I still think it proper to record my sentiments on the subject, in justice to the gentlemen with whom I have long associated; and to convince my Brethren that our re-union with the Society has not induced me to vary a well-grounded opinion, or deviate from the strict line of consistency which I have hitherto pursued."

In 1779, the Lodge of Antiquity, became the "Grand Lodge of England South of the Trent," and proceeded to establish daughter lodges.

This invites a comparison with the proceedings of the ancient Lodge of Kilwinning, which, although a consenting party to the erection of the Grand Lodge of Scotland in 1736, withdrew from it in 1743, and, re-asserting its independence, continued to exercise all the functions of a Grand Lodge until 1807, when a reconciliation was happily effected with the "Grand Body" which had been called into existence in 1736.

The Scottish lodges, however—still existing—of higher antiquity than their Grand Lodge, will form the subject of a separate study, and the analogy between the fortunes of "Mother Kilwinning" and those of our premier English Lodge, I shall pass over for the present, though it will be well to bear in mind that the principle involved in the secession of either of the two constituent particles of a Grand Lodge, was identical, and, therefore, that whatever reasoning is regarded as being conclusive in the one instance, should, without doubt, be considered as equally applicable and convincing in the other.

Preston's argument, to the effect that the Grand Lodge of England had no power to endow a minority of the members of the Lodge of Antiquity with the rights of the majority, appears to me absolutely conclusive of the point which he sought to establish. It may, indeed, be conceded, that the position and rank of the senior lodge could have been conferred upon any set of brethren whom the Grand Lodge might choose to name. These, also without doubt, might have been allowed to style themselves "The Lodge of Antiquity No. 1"—but, with equal certainty, of the body so established the remark would have applied, they "came under a *new Constitution*," and *without* the salvo (which follows these words in the case of Original No. 3, as given by Dr. Anderson in 1738), "though they wanted it not."

In other words, it was quite impossible for the Grand Lodge to transfer the ancient rights of the Lodge of Antiquity from a majority to a minority—or, to put the matter in a different form, the Governing Masonic Body, organised in 1717, was incompetent to *grant* an Immemorial Constitution, which is precisely what it was presumed to have done—by arrogating to itself the right of confiscating the privileges of the real, and arbitrarily bestowing them upon the nominal Lodge of Antiquity.

The actual lodge, therefore, I maintain—in opposition to the view expressed by Bro. Hughan—was unquestionably represented by those members who seceded from the Grand Lodge.

The order of seniority in which the four oldest lodges were arranged by Dr. Anderson may justify a few remarks. The "Approbation" of the earliest "Book of Constitutions" (1723) was followed by the signatures of the Masters and Wardens of 20 London lodges. The officers of what is now the "Lodge of Antiquity" were shown at the first number. The second place was occupied by those of the lodge at the Queen's Head, Turnstile, formerly at the Crown, now defunct. The representatives of our present day "Fortitude and Old Cumberland" and "Royal Somerset House and Inverness" then follow at the numbers 3 and 4 respectively. This is the only occasion where the Four Lodges are shown

in the above order of precedency in any printed list down to, and inclusive of, the year 1737. After that date, however, in the "Constitutions" of 1738 (p. 109), the names and descriptions of the Four are given by Anderson in the same numerical order as the founders and creators of the Grand Lodge of 1717.

The representatives of the Four Lodges probably signed the "Constitutions" of 1723 according to their respective seniority, but of this there is no certainty. According to the Engraved List for 1729, Original No. 1 ("Antiquity") was "constituted" in 1691, and Original No. 2 in 1712. No date of formation is assigned to Original No. 4 ("Royal Somerset House and Inverness"), but it may be supposed to have been established between 1712 and 1717.

The age of Original No. 3 (Fortitude and Old Cumberland) cannot be even approximately determined. It occupied the *second* place on the Engraved Lists for 1723 and 1725, and probably continued to do so until 1728. The position of the lodge in 1729 must have been wholly determined by the date of its "new constitution," and, therefore, affords no clue to its actual seniority. It is quite impossible to say whether it was established earlier or later than Original No. 2 (1712), nor can we be altogether sure—if we assume the precedency in such matters to be regulated by dates of formation—that "Fortitude and Old Cumberland" would be justified in yielding the first place even to the "Lodge of Antiquity" itself.

The histories of many English lodges have been written, and it is a little surprising that among the number there are none which record the glories and vicissitudes of the surviving Three who founded the earliest of Grand Lodges.

A history of the Lodge of Antiquity is, however, in course of preparation, and the undertaking could not possibly have been placed in better hands. Bro. W. H. Rylands, F.S.A., to whom the welcome task has been confided, is not only a Masonic writer of the first rank, but also an antiquary and archaeologist of general reputation.*

The "record" of Fortitude and Old Cumberland will also shortly be published, and, let us hope, the distinguished career of the Royal Somerset House and Inverness Lodge may soon, too, be related. The extraordinary number of remarkable men whose names have appeared on the roll of No. 4 would of itself amply justify the compilation of a lodge history. Payne, Anderson, and Desaguliers were among the early members, and of the later ones a full list would give the names of many of the most eminent persons who have distinguished themselves in the two Houses of Parliament and in the service of the Crown.

The Grand Lodge of Scotland was established in 1736; but for a great many years it stood on a very anomalous footing with regard to the ancient lodges in that kingdom. There were several lodges which never joined the Grand Lodge at all, while others did so and retired, though of the latter some renewed their allegiance. For example, the Haughfoot Lodge (1702) never resigned its independence; Glasgow St. John (1628) only did so in 1850; and the Lodge of Melrose (1598) until so late a date as 1891 refused to recognise any superior authority to its own. The "Company of Acheson Haven" (1601-2) was struck off the roll in 1737, and only re-admitted to the fold in 1814. The "Ancient Lodge," Dundee (1628), appears not to have definitely joined the new organisation until 1745, while other lodges accepted charters of confirmation in the following order:—Dumfries Kilwinning (1687), 1750; St. John's Kelso (1701), 1754; St. Ninian's Brechin (1714), 1756; the Lodge of Dunblane (1696), 1760; and St. John, Jedburgh (1730), in 1767. The lodge of Scoon and Perth (1658), which received a charter of confirmation in 1742, was, in 1807, "upon a memorial to that effect, re-admitted into the bosom of the Grand Lodge, from which for some years past she had been estranged."

There were other old lodges which seceded (for longer or shorter periods) from the Grand Lodge, notably "Mother Kilwinning," and the Lodge of Edinburgh, and their cases present many points of similarity with that of the premier English lodge, upon whose status when disjoined from the Grand Lodge of South Britain, I have commented at some length in the present article.

* Vol. I. has since appeared under the title of *Records of the Lodge Original No. 1, now the Lodge of Antiquity No. 2, of the Free and Accepted Masons of England. Acting by Immemorial Constitution.* Edited by W. H. Rylands, F.S.A., 1911.

The following table is derived from "The Constitution and Laws of the Grand Lodge of Scotland" (edit. 1896), and the only additions by myself are the description of Sanquhar Kilwinning, No. 194—which, being dormant, was off the roll in 1896—and the asterisk that is prefixed to the name of every existing lodge which was either present or represented at the inauguration of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, on St. Andrew's Day, November 30th, 1736.

ORIGINAL NUMBER.	PRESENT NUMBER.	NAMES OF LODGES.	WHEN INSTITUTED OR DATE OF CHARTER.
2	0	*Mother Kilwinning	Before 1598
1	1	*The Lodge of Edinburgh (Mary's Chapel)	Before 1598
	1 ²	Melrose St. John	Before 1598
39	1 ³	*Aberdeen	Before 1670
4	2	*Canongate Kilwinning, Edinburgh	Dec. 20, 1677
6	3	Scoon and Perth	Before 1658
	3 ^{bi}	The Lodge of Glasgow, St. John	Before 1628
7	4	*Glasgow Kilwinning	April 1, 1735
8	5	*Canongate and Leith, Leith and Canongate	1688
9	6	*Old Kilwinning St. John, Inverness	1678
10	7	*Hamilton, Kilwinning	1695
11	8	*Journeyman, Edinburgh	1709
12	9	Dunblane St. John	1709
13	10	*Dalkeith Kilwinning	1724
14	11	Maybole	1726
15	12	*Greenock Kilwinning	1728
16	13	Torphiccn Kilwinning, Bathgate	1728
17	14	St. John, Dunkeld	1737
18	15	*Montrose Kilwinning	1745
19	16	*St. John, Falkirk	1736
	17	*Ancient Brazen, Linlithgow	1737
20	18	St. John Kilwinning, Dumbarton	1726
21	19	*Coupar-of-Fife, Cupar	1736
22	20	*St. John, Lesmahagow	1736
23	21	*Old St. John, Lanark	1736
24	22	St. John Kilwinning, Kilmarnock	1734
25	23	*Dunse	1736
26	24	*Peebles Kilwinning	1736
27	25	St. Andrew, St. Andrew's	1736
28	26	*St. John, Dunfermline	1736
29	27	*Glasgow St. Mungo	1736
30	28	*St. John Kilwinning, Kirkintilloch	1735
32	30	Ancient, Stirling	1708
34	31	St. Mary Coltness, Wishaw	1736
35	32	*St. John, Selkirk	1736
	35	St. John, Falkland	Oct. 12, 1737
52	47	*Operative, Dundee	Feb. 6, 1745
54	49	Ancient, Dundee	May 2, 1745
60	52	St. Andrew, Banff	1749
61	53	Dumfries Kilwinning	Feb. 7, 1750
68	57	St. John Kilwinning, Haddington	Before 1600
69	58	Kelso	Feb. 6, 1754
79	66	St. Ninian, Brechin	Nov. 15, 1756
86	72	*Kirkcaldie	May 15, 1758
130	104	St. John, Jedburgh	1767
118	118	*St. Bride, Douglas	May 2, 1769
222	167	*Biggar Free Operative	Nov. 6, 1786
195	194	*Sanquhar Kilwinning	1777
283	215	St. Andrew, Strathaven	Dec. 4, 1806

The preliminaries relating to the formation of the Grand Lodge of Scotland were arranged by the Four Lodges—Mary's Chapel, Canongate Kilwinning, Kilwinning Scots Arms, and Leith Kilwinning (the two latter of which are now defunct), on the 15th of October, 1736, and a form of circular was agreed upon to be sent to all the Scottish lodges, inviting their attendance either in person or by proxy for the purpose of electing a Grand Master.

The election took place in Mary's Chapel on Tuesday, November 30th, 1736, and 33 of the 100 or more lodges that had been invited were found to be represented.

To the names of the survivors of the "Thirty-three"—28 in number—an asterisk has been prefixed in the "Roll" given above. The remaining five, which, in Scottish phrase, have been "cut off," were Kilwinning Scots Arms, Kilwinning Leith, Athcheson's-Haven, Strathaven, and Maryburgh. But the task of identifying either the living or the defunct lodges which were present or represented on November 30th, 1736, is environed with many difficulties. Some of these may be briefly related.

For example, the younger Laurie in his well-known work (p. 374) has the following note: "The Lodges Hamilton and Strathaven Kilwinning [orig. Nos. 164 and 187], both now extinct, were among those represented in 1736."

The present Hamilton Lodge, No. 7, has been long on the roll, but only one lodge of that name was present at the formation of the Grand Lodge. Laurie says it was Hamilton Kilwinning, Orig. No. 164 (now extinct). Both "Hamilton Lodges" have "Kilwinning" added to their names. Which of them is it that should be numbered among the Thirty-three? As will have been seen, however, the inclination of my own opinion is in favour of present No. 7 being entitled to the distinction. Then, again, Strathaven Kilwinning, orig. No. 187, was struck off the roll in 1843, but there is a living St. Andrew, Strathaven, No. 215, having a constitution (which may have been a charter of confirmation) dated December 4th, 1806.

The lodge at Maryburgh is not mentioned under that name in the Constitutions of 1836, 1848, and 1852, or by Lawrie in 1804; but is shown among the founders of the Grand Lodge by Laurie in 1859, and David Murray Lyon (*Hist. L. of Edinburgh*) in 1873.

With the exception of St. Andrew, Strathaven, present No. 215 (which may or may not be a revival of Strathaven Kilwinning, orig. No. 187), all the lodges in the foregoing table are (according to the best authorities) of older date than their Grand Lodge. Nor does the list given profess to be an exhaustive one, though as several Scottish brethren are prosecuting inquiries on my behalf, I am not without hope that some of the omissions they may succeed in detecting will be incorporated with the text before the present article is reprinted in pamphlet form.

The origin of a great number of these old lodges is unknown, and the dates placed after their names are merely conjectural. These are in the strictest sense of the term "Time Immemorial Lodges," while the others, though classified in the same way, are only accorded a similar status in the narrower and more restricted (or perhaps it would be better to say, Masonic or conventional) sense, of having been in existence before the formation of the Grand Lodge of Scotland in 1736.

In November, 1737, it was resolved that all the lodges holding of the Grand Lodge should be enrolled according to their seniority, which should be determined from the authentic documents they produced; and, in accordance with this principle, the first place on the roll was assigned to Mary's Chapel and the second to Kilwinning. The latter, however (in 1743), resenting this conclusion, resumed its independence, and for well nigh 70 years continued to exist as an independent Grand Body, dividing with the Grand Lodge in Edinburgh the honour of forming branches in Scotland, as well as in the North American Colonies and other British possessions beyond the seas.

Ultimately it was agreed (1807) that Mother Kilwinning should be placed at the head, and her daughter lodges at the end of the roll of the Grand Lodge; but that so soon as the roll should be re-arranged and corrected, the lodges holding of Mother Kilwinning should be ranked according to the dates of their original charters and of those granted by the Grand Lodge.

Foreign Masons were long believed to have introduced their customs into Scotland, and the leading position in the Craft as the centre of Operative Masonry in that kingdom was traditionally attached to Kilwinning.

But the legend pointing to Kilwinning as the original seat of Scottish Masonry, based as it is upon the story which makes the institution of the lodge, and the erection of the Abbey (1140) coeval, is inconsistent with the fact that the latter was neither the first nor

second Gothic structure erected in Scotland. Moreover, a minute inspection of its ruins proves its erection to have been ante-dated by some 80 or 90 years. Still, even were we to accept the dates of erection of the chief ecclesiastical buildings as those of the introduction of Masonry into the various districts of Scotland, it would be found, says an authority of great weight, that Kelso stood first, Edinburgh second, Melrose third, and Kilwinning fourth.

It may, however, be safely laid down, that no argument whatever can be drawn from the existence or non-existence of local Masonic tradition, as all genuine tradition of the kind in Scotland was swept away by the famous Oration of the Chevalier Ramsay in 1737, which substituted for it a spurious tradition, awarding the palm of priority over all the other Scottish lodges to the Lodge of Kilwinning.

The records of Mother Kilwinning begin with the year 1642, but the lodge is referred to in the Schaw Statutes of A.D. 1599, where, in *Item III.*, the Warden-General confirms the rank of "Edinburgh" (Mary's Chapel) as "the first and principal lodge in Scotland," of "Kilwvynning" as the "secund lodge," and of "Stirueling" (Stirling) as the "thrid lodge," respectively.

About 70 "Kilwinning" charters are supposed to have been issued down to the year 1803, but all traces of the greater number of them have disappeared. Many of the lodges so established superadded the name of Kilwinning to that of the town or place where they carried on their work, but this compound title is by no means distinctive of the bodies so created, as the practice was also a common one among the lodges erected by the Grand Lodge, without their having any connection whatever with the present No. 0.

John, seventh Earl of Cassilis, afterwards a prominent figure in the Revolution of 1688, was deacon, or head, of the Lodge of Kilwinning in 1672, and the same position was filled by Alexander, eighth Earl of Eglinton, in 1678. Histories of Mother Kilwinning have been written by Bros. D. Murray Lyon (*Freemasons' Magazine*), 1863-65, and Robert Wylie, 1878.

The earliest minute of the Lodge of Edinburgh (Mary's Chapel) bears the date "Ultimo Julii 1599," and the tercentenary of this interesting epoch in its career was celebrated with much rejoicing in 1899. The history of this famous lodge (with which I have the honour to be connected by the tie of honorary membership) appeared in 1873, and was the great Masonic event of that year. A second edition is now on the verge of publication, and, without doubt, will sustain (for it cannot enhance) the high reputation already acquired by its gifted author (the Grand Secretary of Scotland) as a writer and scholar of the Craft.

The Lodge of Edinburgh (Mary's Chapel), No. 1, together with Canongate Kilwinning, No. 2, and four other lodges, seceded from the Grand Lodge in 1808, and organised themselves into a separate body—July 18th—under the designation of "The Associated Lodges seceding from the Grand Lodge of Scotland." The Master of Mary's Chapel was appointed "Grand Master." A legal struggle ensued, in which the Grand Lodge was thoroughly worsted, and the Associated Lodges emerged from it victorious. Happily, however, a conciliatory spirit prevailed, or the result might have been a multiplicity of Grand Lodges, and in 1813 the seceding lodges returned to their former allegiance.

I have passed very lightly over the eventful career of No. 1, but the history of this famous lodge has been written by a master hand, and like my fellow students of the Craft, I am looking forward with pleasurable anticipation to the appearance of a revised edition of Bro. Lyon's monumental work, in which (unless I have been wholly misinformed) there will be found a quantity of new and original matter of the greatest possible interest to all who make a close study of the early history of our Society.

The written records of the Lodge of Melrose do not go further back than 1674, but there is evidence to show that it must have been in existence for a period long before the entry in the first minute book. The lodge affiliated with the Grand Lodge of Scotland on February 25th, 1891, and on account of its great antiquity was placed on the roll as No. 1². A short sketch of its history was written by the late Bro. W. F. Vernon in 1880, and a fuller one in 1893.

It is now impossible to prove the identity of the ancient Lodge of Aberdeen, No. 1, with that described in the Burgh Records of 1483, though for my own part I see no reason to doubt the probability of their being one and the same.

At what date non-operatives were first admitted in the lodge cannot (in the absence of records) be determined, but it was evidently before 1670. In that year there were 49 members on the roll, and 11 apprentices. Of this number, four were noblemen—the Earls of Errol, Findlater, Dunfermline, and Lord Pitsligo—three ministers, two surgeons,

an advocate, several gentlemen, besides merchants and tradesmen, and only eight were operative Masons.

The customs of the Aberdeen Lodge differed singularly, and at times materially, from those of other Scottish Lodges. Mother Kilwinning chose the seclusion of an "upper chamber" of an ordinary dwelling-house for its meetings, but the Masons of Aberdeen preferred to hold their lodge in "the open fields," rather than in occupied buildings—"the Mearnes in the parish of Nigg, at the stonies at the point of the Ness," being the specified place for entering in the "Outfield Lodge."

The two classes of Brotherhood, known under the names of Domatic and Geomatic (Operative and Speculative) Masons, were kept quite distinct; and no Operative was permitted to receive any of the Three Degrees until he had made his essay piece to each Degree, and it was approved of by the lodge. In the oldest minutes the admission of either class was differently worded.

By the rules of the lodge (which was originally numbered 39, afterwards 34, and only very recently 1³) it is laid down that the Master shall be a gentleman, or Geomatic, Mason. This, with rare exceptions, has been adhered to since 1670, while the office of Senior Warden was held by a Domatic, or Operative, Mason until 1840.

In 1781 the bulk of the Operative members left the old lodge, taking their mark-book with them, and established the "Operative Lodge," No. 150. Since then, as I am informed, the senior lodge of Aberdeen has ceased to register the marks of its members, which is to be regretted, as such an ancient custom was well worthy of preservation. No. 150 continues to be a *purely* Operative lodge, and no person can be admitted, whether by initiation or affiliation, who is not an Operative Mason.

What may be termed the "Premier Scottish Warrant of Constitution," was granted by the Lodge of Kilwinning to several of its own members resident in the Canongate, Edinburgh, and is dated December 20th, 1677.

This was a direct invasion of jurisdiction, for it empowered them to act as a lodge, quite to the same extent as Mother Kilwinning herself, and with a total disregard to the proximity of Mary's Chapel—"the First and Head Lodge of Scotland." Canongate Kilwinning, No. 2, whose "regularity," as dating from December 20th, 1677, was duly recognised by the Grand Lodge, not only supplied the first Scottish Grand Master, William St. Clair of Roslin, but has also numbered amongst its members 21 other brethren who were "Grand Master Masons of Scotland." The eighth and ninth Earl, and the 10th Earl and 1st Marquess of Dalhousie, together with other leading members of Scottish nobility and gentry, figure in this list. An excellent history of No. 2 has been written by Bro. Allan Mackenzie (1888), from whose "selected Names of Members" I extract the following: Under "Law"—Lords Brougham and Loughborough (first Earl of Rosslyn), Lord Chancellors of England; Lords Monboddo, Westhall, and Eskgrove; "Medicine"—James Gregory, John Brown, James Burnes, and Sir William Fergusson; "Army"—Generals Sir James Adolphus Oughton, Sir Ralph Abercrombie, and Lord Frederick Fitzclarence; and "Literature"—James Bruce (the Abyssinian Traveller), James Boswell of Auchinleck, Robert Burns and James Hogg (the Ettrick Shepherd)—who both held the office of Poet-Laureate of the lodge, Henry Mackenzie (author of "The Man of Feeling"), John Wilson ("Christopher North"), D. M. Moir (the "Delta" of "Blackwood's Magazine"), Dr. Hugh Blair (the eminent preacher and lecturer on Rhetoric and Belles-Lettres), John Gibson Lockhart (the biographer of Scott), and William Edmundstoune Aytoun (Professor of Literature and Belles-Lettres, author of "Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers," etc.), R.W. Master, 1839.

Prior to 1846, the Royal Burghs of Scotland held a monopoly of trade, and no person other than a Burgess (or Freeman) could trade within the Burgh. Hence, to evade this monopoly, lodges were formed in the Canongate of Edinburgh and Leith—places in the immediate vicinity of the Burgh—where the members made Masons for fees, which was then held to be carrying on a trade. "Canongate Kilwinning," No. 2, and "Canongate and Leith, Leith and Canongate," No. 5, are examples of this practice. No. 5 dates from 1688, in which year a schism is recorded in the minutes of the Lodge of Edinburgh (Mary's Chapel), the seceders being composed of Masons in the Canongate and Leith.

The first actual encroachment upon the monopoly was made by the Journeymen Lodge, No. 8 (also an offshoot of No. 1), in 1707, but some of the members were master builders and others the sons of burgesses, and therefore privileged. Liberty to give the Mason Word was the principal point in dispute between Mary's Chapel and the Journeymen, which was settled by the "Decreet Arbitral" in 1715, empowering the latter "to

meet together as a society for giving the Mason Word." Several lodges meeting in the Canongate—then a Burgh of Regality, and not a Royal Burgh—afterwards fell into line, and changed their names. For example, Canongate from Leith, No. 36 (1739), to St. David's; and Scots Lodge in Canongate, No. 48 (1745), to Edinburgh St. Andrew. The history of No. 8, by Bro. William Hunter, appeared in the "Freemasons' Magazine" of 1858, and as a separate publication in 1884.

According to its traditional history, the Mason Lodge of Scone (now Scoon and Perth, No. 3), was erected in very early times by those artificers who were employed to build the Abbey, the Palace, and other buildings which were required in this ancient capital of Scotland. When, however, Perth became the capital of the kingdom, the Lodge of Scone was removed to it, and remained there, when at the close of the 15th century, the seat of government was transferred to Edinburgh.

The earliest records go back to 1658, and a minute of that year recites that King James the Sixth of Scotland, by his own desire, had been "entered frieman, meason, and fellow craft," a circumstance which Bro. D. Crawford Smith—in his admirably-written History of the Lodge (1898)—thinks is entitled to our credit, and considers must have taken place in April, 1601.

The Lodge of Glasgow St. John for a long time claimed an extraordinary antiquity, by virtue of a charter alleged to have been granted by Malcolm III., King of Scots, so far back as the year 1057. But the earliest authentic notice of the lodge occurs in a document bearing the date of 1620, which refers to its existence in 1613. It was a party to the St. Clair charter of 1628, but did not join the Grand Lodge until 1850, when it was enrolled under its present name and number (3 *bis*). Unlike other pre-18th century lodges, its membership was exclusively Operative, and though doubtless giving the Mason Word to Entered Apprentices, none were recognised as members until they had joined the Incorporation which was composed of Mason Burgesses. The admission of non-Operatives did not take place until 1842. A "Sketch of the Incorporation of Masons and the Lodge of Glasgow St. John" has been written by Bro. James Cruikshank (1879).

Old Kilwinning St. John, No. 6, is said to be the oldest of the "Kilwinning" Lodges, and to date from 1678, which seniority has been confirmed by the Grand Lodge. An excellent sketch of its career will be found in Bro. A. Ross's "Freemasonry in Inverness" (1877).

Hamilton Kilwinning, No. 7, has already been referred to. Of its history very little is known, but it is considered to date from 1695. The period of origin and the date of charter from the Grand Lodge, of the *other* Hamilton Kilwinning, orig. No. 164 (which, and *not* present No. 7, Laurie thinks was represented at the formation of the Grand Lodge) are alike unknown. It was "cut off" the roll in 1809.

Dunblane St. John, No. 9, possesses records from 1696, at which date Viscount Strathalan was the Master. The following entry appears in the minutes of December 27th, 1720: "Compeared John Gillespie, writer in Dunblane, who was entered on the 24 instant, and after examination was duely passt from the Square to the Compass, and from an Entered Prentice to a Fellow of Craft."

Commissions were issued by the Lodge of Dunblane authorising the entry, elsewhere than in the lodge, "of gentlemen or other persons of entire credit and reputation, living at a distance from the town"—brethren holding such licences being instructed to "have present with them such members of this lodge as can be conveniently got, or, in case of necessity, to borrow from another lodge as many as shall make a quorum without any more."

No. 9 (as we also learn from Bro. D. M. Lyon), 15 years after it had joined the Grand Lodge (which took place in 1741, and *not* as erroneously stated above, in 1760), constituted a number of affiliated brethren into a branch lodge, much in the same way that Canongate Kilwinning, No. 2, had been raised to that position. This circumstance occurred in 1756.

Torpichen Kilwinning, No. 13, ranks under a "constitution" applied for as a kind of warrant of confirmation from Mother Kilwinning in 1728. But on joining the Grand Lodge in 1737 it again obtained the recognition of Kilwinning, on the ground of having once accepted "a charter of erection, of a very ancient date," from that source.

St. John, Dunkeld, No. 14; Montrose Kilwinning, No. 15; and St. John, Falkirk, No. 16, were in existence (according to an extract from the Records of the Grand Lodge, 1748) in 1726. The last named (dormant 1838, revived 1863) was the lodge which recommended the petition of St. Andrew, Boston, Massachusetts, for a charter from the Grand Lodge of Scotland, from whom it first held. A history of No. 16, by Bro. Thomas Johnston, was published in 1887.

Ancient Brazen, No. 17, which was present at the erection of the Grand Lodge, and is shown in the *sixteenth* place, on the roll of lodges given in Lawrie's History (1804), never had a number at all until the precedency of all the Scottish lodges was readjusted and new numbers issued—after the healing of the Kilwinning Schism—in 1816. Its present position on the roll was only ensured by an entry in the minutes of No. 1, showing that it visited the Lodge of Edinburgh about the year 1653.

The earliest records of St. John, Lesmahagow, No. 20, go back to 1716, and those of the Lodge at Dunse, No. 23, to 1728.

William, fourth Earl of Kilmarnock (executed in 1746), was the first Master of St. John Kilwinning, Kilmarnock, No. 22, and he held the same office in the Lodge of Falkirk, No. 16, and Mother Kilwinning, when in November, 1742, he was elected Grand Master Mason of Scotland.

Peebles Kilwinning, No. 24, was at work in 1716. It observed many ancient customs long after they had disappeared from the other lodges, such as holding an annual trial of the Apprentices and Fellow Crafts, appointing intenders (or instructors), and engaging in prayer at the opening ceremony with the special object of ensuing strict impartiality in the transaction of business—otherwise called "Fencing the Lodge." Sketches of No. 24 have appeared from the pens of Bros. Robert Saunderson ("Scottish Freemason," and "Masonic Magazine"), and W. F. Vernon (1893).

St. Andrew, St. Andrew's, and St. John, Dunfermline, Nos. 25 and 26, are, in all probability, identical with the "Lodge of Dumferling," and "Sanct Androis," parties to the St. Clair Charter of 1601. If this be so, the latter, without doubt, must also have been present at the Convention of St. Andrew's in the previous year. Glasgow St. Mungo, No. 27, originally held its Charter from the Lodge Glasgow St. John, which, being an Operative Lodge, and connected with the Incorporated Masons of Glasgow, refused to enter Speculative Masons, but granted a Charter to St. Mungo, as a Speculative Lodge. It afterwards—about 1728 or 1729—obtained a second charter from Mother Kilwinning, under the name of "St. John Kilwinning, Kirk of Glasgow St. Mungo Lodge."

Ancient, Stirling, No. 30, claims a venerable antiquity, as representing the body of Masons who were engaged in the construction of Cambuskenneth Abbey, founded by David I., in 1147.

Passing, however, from tradition, No. 30 may be identical with the "Third Lodge of Scotland," referred to in the Schaw Statutes of 1599, as well as with "The Lodge of Stirling," one of the parties to the St. Clair Charter of 1628. A most interesting account of this lodge was given by Bro. W. J. Hughan in the columns of *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum* (VI., 108-112).

How long St. John, Selkirk, No. 32, had existed before 1736 the historian of the lodge, Bro. W. F. Vernon (1893), was unable to determine, but he gave the approximate date of 1701. It was dormant from 1849 to 1864. Very little is known of St. John, Falkland, No. 35, but there is little or any doubt that it was at work prior to 1736.

The Lodge of Dundee, present at the inauguration of the Grand Lodge, may have been, and probably was, identical with the body of the same name, represented at the Convention of St. Andrew's in 1600, which was also apparently a party to the St. Clair Charter of 1628. But whether the lodge which attended the meeting at Edinburgh, in 1736, is present No. 47 or present 49, there would seem some difficulty in determining. According to Laurie (1859) the Lodge "Dundee," party to the St. Clair Charter of 1628, and a founder of the Grand Lodge in 1736, "is supposed to have been the Ancient Operative, No. 47, which asserts a traditional antiquity of more than a thousand years. It also claims as one of its ancient Masters David, Earl of Huntingdon, to whom is ascribed the erection of a fine old cathedral, which was partly destroyed by fire in 1841."

As will be seen, however, both lodges—47 and 49—have received warrants of confirmation, bearing the date of 1745, and in the charter of No. 49, precisely the same traditional antiquity, with all its details, is recited, which (as we learn from Laurie), has been advanced on the part of No. 47!

The minutes of St. Andrew, Banff, No. 52, extend back to 1703. There is a tradition that in the early days of its existence it used to meet in the Clay-holes, on a cliff near Banff. The lodge was "cut off" in 1837, but has since been restored (after what interval I know not) to its former position on the roll.

According to the "History of the Old Lodge of Dumfries Kilwinning, No. 53," by Bro. James Smith (1892), the year 1575 is assigned as the date of its supposed origin. The minutes begin in 1687. After 1847 the lodge sank into a slumber, from which it did not awake until 1874.

The oldest record in possession of St. John Kilwinning, No. 57 (according to Laurie), is dated 1599, which sets forth that a lodge was opened in Gullane Church (now in ruins) upwards of seven miles from Haddington, probably for the initiation of candidates, as later minutes disclose that the lodge was frequently opened for that purpose in the parish church of Haddington.

It has also been asserted (and I believe remains a tradition of the lodge), that it was an offshoot of the "Lodge of Wark," in Northumberland, about the same year (1599), as that in which it was assigned (by the younger Laurie) a habitation at Gullane. No. 57 was a party to the St. Clair Charter of 1601, and Lyon informs us that the date of the oldest Masonic MS. possessed by the lodge is 1682, and that of its earliest existing minute, December 26th, 1713.

The records of the Lodge of Kelso, No. 58, begin with the year 1701, and its story has been twice admirably related by the late Bro. W. F. Vernon, on the last occasion in his "History of Freemasonry in the Province of Roxburgh, Peebles, and Selkirkshire" (1893). In the same volume will be found sketches of the Lodges of Melrose, Peebles Kilwinning, and St. John, Selkirk (Nos. 1st, 24, and 32, above), and of the work as a whole, I wrote in 1893: "An equally suggestive book it has never been my fortune to review, and I shall state without any fear of contradiction, that more Masonic facts of primary importance to all true students of Freemasonry have never been presented to their notice in a volume of the same size." (*A.Q.C.* VI., 77).

A minute of the lodge of Kelso, dated June 2nd, 1702, records the election as Master of Sir John Pringle of Stichel, the 2nd baronet, a nephew of Walter Pringle, Advocate, who, together with the Right Hon. William Murray and Sir John Harper, was received as a Fellow Craft in the Lodge of Edinburgh, No. 1, on June 24th, 1670. A later minute of No. 58, records the presence on St. John's Day, 1705, of 41 brethren, and among them were the lairds of "Greenhead, Thirlestane, Stodrig, Grubbet, Clifton, Cherrieries, and Smailholme," who are designated not by their own names, but by those of their estates.

St. Ninian, Brechin, No. 66, has records from 1714, and St. John, Jedburgh, from 1730. The latter was "cut off" in 1843, but restored to the roll in, or before, 1859.

A Kilwinning Charter was granted to the Sanquhar Lodge, No. 194, in 1738, but among the Masons' Charter preserved in the records there is one of a brother admitted in 1719. A sketch of this lodge's career—which was "cut off" in 1816, and re-admitted in 1897—has been written (though not yet published) by Bro. James Smith, the Historian of Nos. 53, 63, 79, and 140.

My list of the old Scottish lodges which are of greater antiquity than their Grand Lodge is, I fear, very far from being a complete one. But it must be taken into consideration that there were about 100 lodges in Scotland in 1736, and that this attempt to produce a roll of the kind is a pioneer effort. "You are probing a new and interesting field of inquiry—a new view of Masonry," writes my friend Bro. William Officer, to whom, among other valuable assistance rendered during the preparation of the present article, I am indebted for the suggestion that an extinct Lesmahagow Lodge—orig. No. 153, but without any distinctive title, is mentioned by Laurie (1859), which the Scottish "Constitutions" of 1852 inform us was chartered (or instituted) in 1769, and "cut off" in 1809.

This, or St. John, present No. 20, must have been the body referred to in the Scottish law case, "Masons of the Lodge of Lanark, *contra* Hamilton," decided in 1730, but, I believe, heard in 1729, in which the Lodge at Lanark sought to interdict the Masons at Lesmahagow from giving the *Mason Word* to persons resident there (Lord Kames, "Remarkable Decisions of the Court of Session," Edinburgh, ii. 4).

I have also to thank Bro. Officer for the information that Maryburgh was the original name of Fort William, and as the lodge there is of earlier date than the Grand Lodge, though only holding a nominal precedency from 1743, there is every probability that the lodge which under the name of "Mariaburgh" was present at the Convention of November 30th, 1736, is now represented by the Fort William Lodge, existing No. 43.)

The only other pre-1736 lodges with regard to which any details have come to my knowledge since the tabular statement above first appeared in type, are (to begin with) St. John Operative, Forres, No. 37, and Kirkwall Kilwinning, No. 38² (both of which are shown at the year 1739 on the Grand Lodge roll). To the former (on what purports to be the authority of the Grand Lodge Records) is assigned 1706 as the date of its "Constitution," in the "Laws of the Aberdeen Mason Lodge," 1852 (Appendix I.).

The latter was founded on October 1st, 1736, by two brethren from the Lodge of Stirling and Dunfermline respectively. These having admitted four others, the six formed

themselves "into a proper court," of which a merchant in Kirkwall was the first Master. The lodge obtained a charter from the Grand Lodge in 1740 (*A.Q.C.*, x. 79).

There are also Nos. 187, St. John, Carlisle; 189, St. John, Castle Douglas (off the roll in 1852); and 190, St. George, Aberdeen, all three of which apparently held Charters of Confirmation granting precedence from 1704.

I shall also interpolate by way of *addenda*, that besides the lodges already named which have sustained a break of continuity in their existence, should be mentioned Nos 11, Maybole; and 31, St. Mary Coltness, Wishaw, the former having been "cut off" in 1848, and the latter in 1843, but with regard to their respective periods of dormancy I have no information.

The narrative clauses (or recitals) which are to be found in the various charters of Confirmation, would doubtless supply much valuable information respecting the antiquity (legendary or otherwise) of the old Scottish lodges. But the task of examining all these documents would be a truly herculean one.

The idea, however, has occurred to me that it might be possible to unite all the Time Immemorial Lodges now existing in a League or Association, with the special object of placing on permanent record whatever may be found to exist in their several archives that would be of interest to the craft universal.

It is not a little strange that for the earliest information regarding the existence of our oldest English lodges, to wit, the surviving Three who took part in the formation of the Mother of Grand Lodges, we must refer to a printed book—Dr. Anderson's "Constitutions" of 1738—as no minutes of any living lodge extend back to the date of the famous Convention of the Four London Lodges in 1716. Nor do we possess, in South Britain, more than the actual records of a solitary representative of the numerous lodges which at one time or another must have been at work, during the dim and uncertain period of Masonic history ante-dating the erection of the first Grand Lodge.

The records of the Alnwick Lodge comprise a good copy of the Manuscript Constitution, certain Rules of the lodge, enacted in 1701, and the ordinary minutes, which commence in 1703 and terminate on June 24th, 1757. The last-named, however, between 1710 and 1748, while not wholly wanting, contain at best very trivial entries. This lodge, which never surrendered its independence, was still in existence until at least the year 1763, and from first to last was an operative rather than a speculative fraternity. Indeed, that it was speculative at all, in the sense of possessing members who were not operative Masons, or of discarding its ancient formulary for the tri-gradal ceremonial of the Grand Lodge, is very problematical.

North of the Tweed, however, a far greater body of evidence relating to the early history of the Craft has happily been preserved.

Freemasonry has come down to us in two distinct channels, an English and a Scotch one. Ultimately, the two streams became united, and this "meeting of the waters" occurred in 1736. From that date a feature is added to Freemasonry, its universality, upon which I desire to lay great stress.

A system of Scottish Masonry, differing from that of England, might have continued to exist, side by side with the latter, and that it did not, is a matter of much importance, which has been almost totally overlooked. For example, it has been the habit—especially in America—to assume that Masonry was *Scottish* before 1717, and *English* afterwards.

The year 1717 is, indeed, an important one. We are supposed to pass from the domain of Ancient to that of Modern Masonry. But the change was not carried out in a day or a year. Modern Masonry, it is true, had its *beginning* at the formation of the Grand Lodge of England (1717), but Ancient Masonry still existed by its side, nor was it until the example set in London had been followed in Edinburgh (1736) that the Old System may be said to have been practically supplanted by the New.

For this reason the early records of the old Scottish Lodges become of surpassing interest to all true students of Freemasonry, and the first care of any such Society as the one whose formation I have ventured to recommend, would (or should) be to take the necessary steps to perpetuate, by the aid of the printing press, the ancient documentary evidence still existing—but entombed in the archives of private lodges—which relates to the Scottish Craft.

Other objects that would profitably engage the attention of the southern wing (or branch) of the proposed League or Society, consisting of the three Time Immemorial Lodges of English origin, might be freely cited; but here I bring my present remarks to a close, though (with the editorial sanction) I shall resume them, should either the task which has

been begun of identifying the (at one time) Independent Lodges of Scotland, or the suggestion thrown out with regard to a League of Time Immemorial Lodges, be taken up by other readers of the *Freemason*.

I must not omit to say, though it involves more "last words," that besides Bro. William Officer—whose name worthily heads the list—I have received valuable assistance during the preparation of this article from the Grand Secretary of Scotland, Bro. W. J. Hugan, and Bro. James Smith, of Shotts, N.B.

Extract
from the
Official Masonic Statutes
of 28th December 1599.

"It is thocht needfull & expedient be my
Lord Warden Generall that Ede, salbe in all
tyme coming as of befoir the first and princi-
cipall ludge in Scotland, and yt. Kilwynning
be the secund ludge as of befoir is notourlic
manefest in our awld antient writtis and that
Stirling salve the third ludge conforme to the
awld privileges thairof.
.. .. .

"William Schaw,

"Maistir of Work.

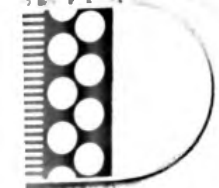
"Wairden of ye Maasons."



XII.

THE DEGREES OF PURE AND
ANCIENT FREEMASONRY.

[Ars Quatuor Coronatorum, 1903.]



THE DEGREES OF PURE AND ANCIENT FREEMASONRY.

[A. Q. C., 1903.]

I.

PROEMIAL.

The more sides a man has to his mind, the more certain he may be of receiving blows on all of them from one party or other.—JOHN STIRLING.

Very early in the history of this Lodge, and while many critical students and valued friends, whose loss we have since had to deplore, were still in our midst, it was announced in the printed circulars which are issued before our meetings, and the notification has been continued to the present day, that among the papers in course of preparation, there was one by myself on the subject with which I am now about to proceed.

In January, 1890, I did indeed read before the Lodge what I ventured to describe as a preliminary thesis, which I hoped would pave the way for an early consideration of the more concrete subject of "Degrees," and my fugitive remarks *On the Antiquity of Masonic Symbolism* (A.Q.C., iii., 7-32), were most kindly received, not only by living brethren who have greatly distinguished themselves in the field of Masonic research, but also by eminent members of the Fraternity, whose deaths, in particular instances, have left gaps in our ranks which in all human probability will never be filled up. I am not going to cite the entire death-roll, but there are two names to which I shall refer—those of the late PROFESSOR T. HAYTER LEWIS, a Past Master of the Lodge; and the late ALBERT PIKE—one of its firmest supporters beyond the seas, and who was himself probably the most gifted of all the scholars and antiquaries whose writings have from time to time cast a lustre on the literature of Freemasonry.

It was the opinion of PROFESSOR HAYTER LEWIS that a key to much that is enigmatical in the symbolic teachings of the Craft, might be found in the study of Masons' Marks—a suggestion which in the present paper I can do no more than reproduce.

Dealing with the same problem, ALBERT PIKE wrote me—in a letter dated December 2nd, 1888—"As I have said, the symbolism of Masonry is, in my opinion, the soul of Masonry. When you have read what I have written, you may be led to take up and complete, or at least carry further, the work. It is a wide field, and I am quite conscious how little I have done towards exploring it. If, as is said in our Western Country, I have 'blazed the way' for others, I am quite content."

In my *Concise History of Freemasonry*, which has only just issued from the press, I have again endeavoured to "carry further the work," for which my late friend so carefully "blazed the way," and the "Digression on Degrees" to be found there, will form a starting point from which, in a final essay, I shall sum up with all the perspicuity at my command, the conclusions that seem to be deducible from the evidence, with respect to the existence of Masonic Degrees in 1717-1738, and presumably from a period far more remote.

THE ARGUMENT.

There were some Mathematicians, that could with one fetch of their Pen make an exact Circle, and with the next touch, point on the centre; is it therefore reasonable to banish all use of the Compasses? Set Forms are a Pair of Compasses.—JOHN SELDEN.

If we begin with the three Craft—or, as they are sometimes called, the St. John's—degrees of to-day, their devolution can be traced with sufficient exactitude from the year 1723, nor is it reasonable, or perhaps I should more rightly say warrantable, to believe that any change in the method of imparting the secrets of Masonry could possibly have been carried out by the Grand Lodge of England between 1717 and 1723. But during the period immediately preceding the era of Grand Lodges, there is much darkness and uncertainty. To a necessarily great extent, therefore, all speculations with regard to the more remote past of the sodality must repose on inference or conjecture, and deductions which are accepted with an easy faith by some, will be rejected as irrational by others.

The boundaries of legitimate conjecture cannot indeed be defined *ex cathedra* by anyone, and the utmost we can do is to pursue our researches according to the evidential methods which have received the approval of the best authorities.

Adopting this course, a plurality of degrees in *England*, prior to 1717, is plainly inferential, and the burden of proof rests on any person who maintains the negative of such proposition. I do not forget that by those who are disbelievers in the existence of a plurality of degrees prior to 1717-23, great stress is laid on the circumstance that there are no lodge Minutes to uphold the contention to which they are opposed, and I should go fully with them if there were *English* (as there are *Scottish*) Lodge Minutes recording the proceedings of the Craft, and noticing only a solitary degree. But save in a single instance, the Alnwick records, which, moreover, relate to the customs of Operative Masons, there are in existence no Minutes whatever of English Lodges at any time preceding the formation of a Grand Lodge in 1717.

All the other Lodges, however, in South Britain, which we read of as being in existence during the seventeenth century, appear to have been of a speculative (or symbolic) character, and, if we are to credit Dr. Plot, the "Custom" (of Freemasonry) was, in 1686, "spread more or less all over the Nation." Moreover, as the doctor takes especial care to inform us, he "found persons of the most eminent quality who did not disdain to be of this fellowship,"

In the absence of *English*, reliance has, indeed, been largely reposed in *Scottish* Lodge records of early date, which from the close of the sixteenth down to the beginning of the eighteenth century, preserve an unbroken silence with regard to the existence of aught but a single step, or degree.

The early Masonic customs of the *Scottish* are therefore supposed by some persons to have been identical with those of the *English* Freemasons. On this point, however, I have already expressed my views at considerable length in the article *On the Antiquity of Masonic Symbolism*, to which I have previously referred (*A.Q.C.* iii., 7-32), and in the present one, to avoid prolixity and vain repetition, I shall assume that readers who are desirous of obtaining further light to illuminate any topic that may be touched upon in the course of these remarks, will do me the favour of perusing, not only my Essay on Symbolism, but also the "Digression on Degrees," which is to be found in my latest published work.

I am proceeding, however, from the known to the unknown, or, in other words, am endeavouring to trace our symbolic traditions of the *present day* in an *upward* direction. It is easier, and more in accordance with the practice of Masonic writers, to reverse the process, and, instead of tracing *up*, to wholly disregard any missing links in the chain of evidence, and trace *down*. The prevailing sentiment among enquirers of this class is perhaps not unfairly summed up in the following lines:—

"Truth only shows the clouds of woe
Spread round for life's confusion..
I'd rather sun me in the glow,
Though fleeting, of Delusion!"

It is possible, indeed, that the time has arrived—or, if not, I shall cherish the hope that to some slight extent I may assist in accelerating its progress—when the historical methods which are now universally practised by scholars who are *not* of our fraternity, will be welcomed by intelligent Freemasons, as tending to root out and thoroughly extirpate the vast amount of enthusiastic rubbish, which, passing under the name of "Masonic history," has resulted in the whole literature of the Craft being regarded by the great majority of mankind with a contempt which is too intense and too disdainful to permit of their even seriously considering the rational grounds for ancestral pride which the Freemasons may justly claim.

The attention of the reader will now be directed to a passage in my Essay on Symbolism (*A.Q.C.* iii., 24), where I contend:—"If we once get beyond or behind the year 1717, *i.e.*, into the domain of Ancient Masonry, and again look back, the vista is perfectly illimitable, without a speck or shadow to break the continuity of view which is presented to us." What the secrets really were that the Grand Lodge of England inherited in 1717, will form the subject of an exhaustive inquiry in the next division of this paper. But some observations have yet to be made before the present one is brought to a close.

Eight years *before* the creation of the earliest of Grand Lodges, the following, from the pen of Mr. (afterwards SIR RICHARD) STEELE (describing a class of men called "Pretty Fellows"), was printed in the *Tatler* :—

June 9, 1709,—“ You see them accost each other with effeminate airs ; *they have their signs and tokens like Free-masons.*”

A commentator observes,—“ Signs and tokens are spoken of in the same technical language which is employed at the present time, and as being something peculiarly and distinctively Masonic . . . The conclusion forces itself irresistibly upon the mind of every candid and intelligent person, that there existed in London in 1709, and for a long time *before*, a Society known as the Free-masons, having certain *distinct marks of recognition.*”

The existence of a plurality of degrees is carried still farther back, but the precise extent to which the chain of proof is lengthened, every student must estimate for himself, by the evidence of DR. THOMAS MANNINGHAM, D.G.M., who, in a letter dated July 12th, 1757—criticizing the so-called “ SCOTS ” degrees practised on the Continent, states that among those who were strangers to them, is “ one old Brother of Ninety, who I convers'd with lately ; This Brother assures me he was made a Mason *in his youth*, and has constantly frequented Lodges, 'till rend'ed incapable by his advanc'd Age, & never heard, or knew any other *Ceremonies or Words*, than those us'd in general amongst us ; *Such Forms were delivered to him, & those he has retain'd.*”

“ Secret *Signes* ” are mentioned by DR. PLOT in his account of the Society (1686) ; the “ *seu'all WORDS & Signes of a free Mason,*” are referred to in Harleian MS. No. 2054, of (about) the year 1665 ; and earlier still there is the statement of SIR WILLIAM DUGDALE, recorded after the lapse of “ many yeares ” by JOHN AUBREY, which was probably made almost concurrently with the initiation of ELIAS ASHMOLE in 1646 :—

“ The Fraternity of adopted Masons. They are known to one another by certain *Signes and Watch words.* . . . The manner of their adoption is very formall.”

The language of signs is probably older than the language of sounds, and among the ancient Hebrews it was still a living language to a much greater extent than it is among ourselves.

Signs, however, must always, from the nature of things, have been a common feature of all secret associations. That in all forms of the ANCIENT MYSTERIES—of which the ELEUSINIAN were the holiest in Greece—the *initiated* possessed secret signs of recognition, is free from doubt. There were the Lesser and the Greater ELEUSINIA, forming two *steps* or degrees, at each of which an oath was administered to the candidate and certain secrets were imparted to him. In the second and more important ceremony, the priest (or hierophant) *proposed* certain *questions*, to which the aspirant *returned answers in a set form.* He was afterwards led by the mystagogue in the darkness of night into the interior of the lighted sanctuary, and was allowed to SEE what none but those who went through a similar ordeal ever beheld.

In the opinion of many learned men, the Cabalists, the Hermetical (or Occult) Philosophers, and the Rosicrucians—all of which sects or societies are supposed to have possessed their secret *forms*—were the links in an invisible chain connecting Freemasonry with some of the Customs of the ANCIENT MYSTERIES. This may or may not have been the case, but to those who deride the claims of the classes of Mystics to whom I have last referred, to be regarded as the possible intermediaries in bringing down to the early Free-masons some of the now almost forgotten learning of antiquity, I reply (in the words of John Stirling)—

“ A self-complacent horror of mysticism in speculation is apt to be the mark of him who cannot see at all, what the mystic sees obscurely.”

III.

1717 - 1738.

“ *But since our sects in prophecy go higher,
The text inspires not them, but they the text inspire.*”—JOHN DRYDEN.

The period intervening between the years 1717 and 1738 has been termed the “ Epoch of Transition,” and the Symbolism of Masonry as we now possess it, is generally supposed to have passed through some kind of an evolutionary process in the interval following the formation of a Grand Lodge in the earlier year, and preceding the appearance of ANDERSON'S *New Book of Constitutions* in the later one. It is true, indeed, that by a few Masonic scholars the cycle during which the degrees or steps of pure and ancient

Freemasonry were crystallising into their present form, number, and method of progression, is held to exactly correspond with the space of time which separates DR. ANDERSON'S *Constitutions* of 1723, from the 2nd edition of the same work in 1738. But before considering this theory with the fulness which it deserves, it will be best if I commence with a *résumé* of the opinions which have prevailed with regard to the existence of distinct steps, or as we now call them, degrees of Masonry, from the time of PAYNE, ANDERSON and DESAGULIERS, down to that of WILLIAM PRESTON, and from the thirty or more years during which the author of the *Illustrations of Masonry* was viewed by the Craft as,

"The World's great oracle in times to come."

down to the generation of which we ourselves form a part.

Starting from the year 1723, the first ray of light which is cast on the symbolism of Masonry as presumably inherited by the Grand Lodge of England, we meet with in the *Book of Constitutions*, published by the authority of that body six years after its original formation in 1717. The work contains a code of laws, professedly compiled by GEORGE PAYNE in 1721, and published by JAMES ANDERSON (with the sanction of the Grand Lodge) in 1723. These laws were subsequently altered and amended, and the terms "Old Regulations" (O.R.), and "New Regulations" (N.R.) respectively, were used to distinguish the rules promulgated in 1723, from those enacted at any subsequent date.

"Old Regulation" XIII. lays down:—"Apprentices must be admitted Masters and Fellow Craft only here [*i.e.*, in the Grand Lodge] unless by a dispensation."

Eighteen years ago (1885) I pointed out that *two* degrees are here referred to and not *three* (*History of Freemasonry* ii., 358), and the idea, though at first received with general incredulity, has now been accepted as established fact.

A further supposition has since occurred to me, and it is, that outside the immediate *entourage* of the Grand Lodge, the same imaginary tri-gradal system which was supposed by DR. MANNINGHAM (D.G.M. 1752-56) and all subsequent authorities down to our own day, to have existed in 1723, must have been believed in with an equal faith by the contemporaries of DR. ANDERSON, at the date when his first *Book of Constitutions* saw the light. This popular delusion was, in all probability, one of the leading factors in bringing about the actual expansion of the degrees which took place at a later date.

On this point I shall again touch, but before I forsake it let me ask the reader to carry in his mind during the progress of our inquiry—that if Old Regulation XIII. had been properly understood by a past generation of German Masonic writers, we should have heard nothing whatever of a new ceremonial (or new degrees) having been concocted between 1717 and 1723.

After the latter date, there occurred indeed an expansion, or perhaps it would be better to say, a re-arrangement of the degrees, and the date (or dates) at which this took place, constitutes one of the problems which—to some slight extent—it is the design of the present paper to resolve.

But I must proceed by steps, and the first one will be, as already indicated, a survey of the supposed facts of Masonic history, on which conclusions more or less erroneous, have been based, from the first quarter of the seventeenth down to the last quarter of the nineteenth century. I am not, however, able to travel over this period in unbroken chronological sequence, as would be desirable, because the lively imaginations of successive theorists have been exercised at widely different dates, and perhaps the most irrational of all the curious suppositions that have arisen with respect to the symbolism of the Craft, namely, that prior to the year 1717, there was in existence only a solitary degree, was not advanced until about the middle of the century which has just passed away.

I shall enumerate, therefore, the series of conjectures which have formed a postulatory basis for the deductions of the *literati* (as well as the *illiterati*) of Freemasonry, not according to the dates to which they refer, but as nearly as I can in strict harmony with the periods of time at which their influence made itself felt.

In the first place, there was, as I trust the reader will believe, after he has perused the whole of the argument, a general impression caused by the *Constitutions* of 1723 (O.R. XIII.), that a tri-gradal system was recognised by, and the *two* higher degrees thereof conferred in, the Grand Lodge.

Next, at some time after 1738, the recollection of there having been at one time a system of only two degrees, altogether faded away, even in the memories of the leading officials of the Craft.

Then came the Great Schism. The ANCIENTS went one way and the MODERNS another. To explain their differences Spurious Rituals sprang up in profusion and met with a ready sale. The older Grand Lodge, it was revealed, had changed the method in which the first two degrees were communicated.

There was a fusion of the two Grand Lodges of England, in 1813, and as the senior adopted the ritual of the junior body, the conviction naturally followed that the former had returned to the old ways.

The next assumption was of German origin, and, though long ago proved to be founded on a mis-reading of the evidence, still maintains a bold front, and is cherished as an article of faith, by a large number of Freemasons. Their contention is that a plurality of degrees was concocted and not inherited by the earliest Grand Lodge: or, to vary the expression, that prior to the year 1717, there was only a single form of reception, and that whatever may have been the secrets of Masonry in those times, they were all communicated to new comers on their admission into the Society.

Many other fables are also devoutly believed in by a large class of Masonic writers, whose minds are more adventurous than profound, but the latest phase of the prevailing credulity which it is my present purpose to review, consists of a revival of the old point at issue between the ANCIENTS and the MODERNS. The Grand Lodge of 1717 is alleged to have forgotten or discontinued the ceremonies of the ROYAL ARCH and PAST MASTER'S degrees, and to have varied the method in which the first and second steps of Masonry were originally conferred.

Having now placed before the reader an outline of the leading fallacies which have established a footing in the general literature of the Craft, my next step will be to shew, if I can, that in describing them as the offspring of Masonic unreason, I do not travel very wide of the mark.

The early history of the Grand Lodge of England is enveloped in some confusion, but certain landmarks are nevertheless discernible, which if carefully kept in view will enable the traveller to avoid wandering from the right track. There are no official records of earlier date than 1723, and the only repository in which is to be found a connected account of the early proceedings of the Grand Lodge—ANDERSON'S *Second Book of Constitutions*—bears the date of 1738. It was compiled, moreover, under circumstances that greatly detract from its value as an historical work (*Pocket Companion* 1754, Pref.) But there is no other documentary evidence whatever relating to the governing body of English Freemasonry, between the years 1717 and 1720 (inclusive). The work in question tells us that there was one meeting of the Grand Lodge on the St. John's Day in each year, and that in 1720 GEORGE PAYNE was elected Grand Master for the second time. "This year," according to DR. ANDERSON (whose typographical methods are reproduced), "at some private Lodges, several very valuable *Manuscripts* (for they had nothing yet in Print) concerning the fraternity, their Lodges, Regulations, Charges, Secrets, and Usages (particularly one writ by Mr. *Nicholson Stone*, the Warden of *Inigo Jones*) were too hastily burnt by some scrupulous Brothers, that these Papers might not fall into strange Hands."

What those "Manuscripts" really were, will afford matter for curious and interesting speculation. It has been commonly supposed that they were copies of the old written, or so-called "Gothic," Constitutions, but there seems to myself room for reflection, whether the "Secrets, Usages," and the paper "writ by Nicholas Stone," an "Accepted Mason of 1639" (Conder, *Hole Craft*) may not point in the direction of early and *authorised* rituals, by means of which the ceremonies of the Craft as practised during the splendour of Mediæval Operative Masonry, were preserved for a long period after its decay.

Colour is lent to this supposition by the *Diary* of DR. STUKELEY (initiated in January, 1721), who tells us: "I was the first person made a freemason in London for many years. We had great difficulty to find members enough to perform the ceremony." "His curiosity," he further informs us, "led him to be initiated into the mysteries of Masonry, suspecting it to be the remains of the mysteries of the Antients." Upon these entries I have elsewhere remarked, that they jointly indicate the existence of a "superior degree," and also warrant the inference that there was a difficulty in finding a sufficiency of brethren who were able to assist in working it at London in 1721 (*A.Q.C.* vi., 141).

We also learn from STUKELEY that on June 24th, 1721, at a meeting of the Grand Lodge, "the G^d M^r Mr. PAIN . . . read over a new sett of articles to be observ'd."

At the next meeting of the Grand Lodge—September 29th, 1721—the DUKE OF MONTAGU, Grand Master, "and the Lodge finding fault with all the Copies of the *old Gothic Constitutions*, order'd Brother JAMES ANDERSON, A.M., to digest the same in a new

and better Method." This is the description given by ANDERSON himself (1738) of the mandate which he received in 1721, and the result, as most readers will be aware, was the eventual publication in printed form of the first *Book of Constitutions* in 1723. The work contains the General Regulations of the Masonic body owing fealty to the Grand Lodge, and we are told was "Compiled first by MR. GEORGE PAYNE, ANNO 1720, when he was **Grand Master**, and approv'd by the GRAND-LODGE on ST. JOHN BAPTIST'S DAY, ANNO 1721 . . . And by the Command of . . . GRAND-MASTER MONTAGU, the AUTHOR . . . has compar'd them with, and reduc'd them to the ancient RECORDS and immemorial USAGES of the Fraternity, and digested them into this new Method, with several proper Explications, for the Use of the Lodges in and about LONDON and WESTMINSTER." (*Constit. Grand Lodge of England, 1723.*)

The article of the foregoing Code we are concerned with in the inquiry I am now upon, is O.R. XIII., of which the terms have been given, and conjecture will always be rife as to how far the actual handiwork of the *English* Grand Master was "embellished" by the *Scottish* commentator and "Presbyterian Divine." On this point no two persons are likely to be agreed, but its consideration is in one sense immaterial, as we are estopped—before the tribunal of "History"—from going behind the record by the undoubted fact that the "General Regulations" were printed and promulgated with the approval of GEORGE PAYNE, who therefore must have adopted, if he did not originate, *all* the articles in the Code.

That *two* degrees were worked by the English Masons before ANDERSON was intrusted with his mandate by the Grand Lodge, seems to me free from doubt, nor is there a scrap of evidence from which we might infer that any alteration in communicating the secrets of Masonry had been carried out between 1717 and 1721, or, it may be added, in the interval separating the latter year from 1723.

It is, however, fairly inferential, that the use of Scottish Operative titles in the "General Regulations"—for example, Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft and Master Mason, was the work of JAMES ANDERSON, who copied them from the Masonic phraseology at Aberdeen, his native town. *It is quite clear that these expressions had no existence in the terminology of English Masonry prior to the appearance of the "Constitutions" of 1723.*

During the continuance of Ancient Masonry, or, to be more precise, prior to the era of Grand Lodges, there were two classes of Masons. In England there were Apprentices and Masters (or Fellows), and in Scotland Entered Apprentices and Masters (or Fellow-Crafts). The English Master (or Fellow) and the Scottish Master (or Fellow-Craft) was in each instance a "passed" Apprentice or Master in his trade.

† "Ane Entered Apprentise" was "received as *master and fellow of the craft*," at the LODGE OF KELSO, in 1701; and two Brethren were "taken in as *Maisters or fellow-crafts*," at LODGE ST. JOHN, Jedburgh, in 1736.

In the same year as that in which the *Book of Constitutions* appeared (1723) there was published the first of an interminable series of Spurious Rituals to which a date can be assigned. These productions are divisible into three groups, commencing in 1723, 1730, and 1755, respectively, though there are two of uncertain date, one of which, *Sloane MS.* No. 3329, in the opinion of some experts in handwriting, is supposed to have been transcribed in the 17th century; while the other, *A Mason's Confession*, originally printed in the *Scots Magazine* (xvii., 133), 1755, is stated in the preamble to the alleged revelation to be a description of what was imparted to the writer of it at his admission into the Craft in 1727. These two pieces possess many features of interest, but what is faith to one set of students will be but fancy to another, as in either case the dates from which they speak, as reflecting, however faintly, the usages of a contemporary Freemasonry, are alone of any determinate value, and these we cannot hope to see placed on a footing of reasonable certainty until some one with abnormal gifts and untiring industry succeeds in classifying the various texts of the Spurious Rituals or alleged "Exposures," with a similar accuracy to that attained by Dr. BEGEMANN in his masterly analysis of the Manuscript Constitutions of the Society.

I do not scruple, however, to place on record my own opinion that the *Sloane MS.* as a compilation (and not merely as a transcript) is of later date than 1723, and *A Mason's Confession* than 1727. To accord a higher antiquity to the former, would be to run counter to the other *Scottish* documentary evidence, which is silent and unbroken with respect to the existence of a plurality of degrees in the 17th century; while if we allow ourselves to believe that the latter reflects, though obscurely, the usage of A.D. 1727, it may indeed supply a missing link in the chain of evidence from which has been inferred that three

degrees were actually worked prior to the third decade of the 18th century—but only by casting to the wind the testimony of a contemporary character from every other source, and upon the credibility of which there has not hitherto been a stain of suspicion.

The earliest of the Spurious Rituals, or Masonic Catechisms, to which a date can be positively assigned, is *A Mason's Examination*, which appeared in the *Flying Post or Postmaster*, No. 4712, from Thursday, April 11th, to Saturday, April 13th, 1723.

This, in my own judgment, is by far the most interesting of all the vast host of so-called revelations of Masonic secrets that have been published in our own or in any other country. The flavour of the "Kale-yard" which is so noticeable in *Sloane MS.* 3329, and in several of the bogus rituals of later date, is scarcely distinguishable at all, and the little there is of it; for example, the expression "Entred Apprentice," which occurs once only, was probably copied from ANDERSON'S *Book of Constitutions*, a work that the anonymous contributor to the *Flying Post* had evidently perused, as may be plainly deduced from the exordium to his catechism. In other words, *A Mason's Examination* is an *English* and not a *Scottish* compilation. "Fellows" and not "Fellow Crafts" are referred to throughout, and except in the solitary instance above cited, we meet with the expression "Apprentice" in lieu of the compound word "Entered Apprentice," which has since taken its place in the Masonic vocabulary of the South. The catechism in its bearing on degrees is on all fours with the indications which are to be gathered from Old Regulation XIII. There were two steps of Masonry, the Apprentice Part and the Master's Part, the former comprising the ceremonies of Initiation and Passing, and the latter that of Raising, as (without material alteration) they are practised at the present day in our *English* Lodges. Upon the question which subsequently arose, and was so fiercely debated by the "Ancients" and "Moderns," namely, the order of priority to be accorded to the severed moieties of the original first Degree, O.R. XIII., throws no light whatever. The Spurious Ritual of the same year holds out indeed a torch which dispels a portion of the obscurity that overhangs the subject, but we see as in a glass dimly, and our unaided vision can merely discern that in entering the portals of Masonry, the steps of the newcomer inclined neither to the right hand nor the left.

Returning to O.R. XIII., there are two conjectures with respect to the working of the "Master's Part" being prohibited in the private Lodges, one of which may recommend itself to those who believe that GEORGE PAYNE was the sole author of the change; and the other to the body of students who are unable to credit that in the "General Regulations" of 1723, JAMES ANDERSON built on any other foundations than were supplied by the labour of his own hands.

The first supposition rests upon the possibility of the Grand Master of 1720-21 having been influenced by the action of the "Scrupulous Brothers," by whom "several valuable Manuscripts" were destroyed (1720). It may well have been that the proper method of imparting the secrets of the superior degree was only preserved in the memories of a few persons (of which there is corroboration in the *Diary* of DR. STUKELEY), and therefore it was deemed expedient that the ceremony should be performed with exactitude in the Grand Lodge.

On the other hand the explanation is perhaps to be found in the customs of *Anderson's* native city. At Aberdeen the admission of a Master (in any trade) lay with the "House" or "Incorporation," the nearest approach to which in the English Speculative Masonry of A.D. 1723 was, without doubt, the Grand Lodge, as the traditional successor and representative of the "General Assembly."

The *Mason's Examination* of 1723 is said to have caused a greater stir among the Masonic body than was occasioned by the appearance of any similar catechism of later date (*A.Q.C.* x., 137). This was probably due to its being the first publication of the kind, but the fact remains that it was so thoroughly stamped out that only a solitary copy has come down to us, which was accidentally discovered among the files of the English newspapers in the British Museum, by myself. There are no existing minutes of the Grand Lodge of the same early date (April 1723) to refer to, so we cannot tell whether the incident flurried the equanimity of the Grand Officers of that period. Judging by the Official records of 1730 (to be presently cited) it must have done so, and I therefore commend to those by whom it is confidently supposed that "alterations in the established forms" were made by the Grand Lodge owing to the publication of "*Masonry Dissected*" in 1730, the propriety of ante-dating this irregularity to the year 1723, when a "Spurious Ritual" actually did appear, which gave great umbrage to the Society. The Grand Lodge, it is true, never meddled with the ceremonies either in 1723 or 1730, but if, after the fashion of

the most approved Masonic writers, we give a free rein to the imagination, and boldly assume that alterations *were* made shortly after either one or the other of these dates, then the earlier year will be by a long way the less incredible of the two, to assign for their occurrence.

The point, however, that I am most desirous of establishing, in connection with the year 1723, is that O.R. XIII. and "*A Mason's Examination*" are mutually confirmatory, and prove beyond question that two degrees or steps of Masonry were alone known and practised at that time.

In 1724 we meet with the manifestoes of the GORMOGONS, a Society of which I must not in the present paper speak any further than is strictly pertinent to the subject of degrees. The fulminations of this Order are especially directed against JAMES ANDERSON and Dr. DESAGULIERS, who under a thin veil are accused of having taken—in the *Constitutions* of the previous year—unwarrantable liberties with the Operative Charges and Regulations (*A.Q.C.*, viii., 125), and there are indications from which may be inferred, that the working of the "Master's Part" had recently been revived after falling into disuse among the greater number of Lodges (*The Plain Dealer*, September 14, 1724). In the same year (1724) were published *The Secret History of the Free-Masons*, better known as the *Briscoe MS.*, which professes to be a revelation of the ceremonies made use of in the Lodges; and *The Grand Mystery of Free-Masons Discover'd*. Of the former there is nothing to say beyond the remark that its "short Dictionary of private Signs, or Signals," was probably drawn up at the instigation of the Freemasons, as a sort of counterpoise to the catechism in the *Flying Post*. Upon the latter it would be easy to enlarge, and there are some special features which in any general review of the long series of Spurious Rituals would claim particular notice. But with regard to the question of degrees, *The Grand Mystery* is worthy of its name. The secrets of what in a few years later is plainly designated as a higher step, are clearly referred to, but there is no specific allusion to the existence of a first and second degree. Yet it will be desirable to bear in mind during the progress of our inquiry, that even if real instead of Spurious Rituals were being made the subject of consideration in the present paper, an absolute uniformity among them could not be expected. With certain circumstantial variations in the different Lodges, questions were asked and answers made *according to a set form*. These colloquies were entrusted to the memories of the "New Men," and must therefore have often become forgotten or distorted, in accordance with the natural law which governs the transmission of all oral tradition.

What is now generally regarded as the earliest evidence of the degrees of Masonry having been communicated in three distinct steps, will be found in the minutes of the *Philo-Musicæ et Architecturæ Societas*, London, which commence on the 18th of February, 1725, and terminate on the 23rd of March, 1727. The records of this association are included among the *Quatuor Coronati* publications (*Q.C.A.* ix.) and form the subject of a separate notice. It will be sufficient therefore in the present article to ask the reader to hold his judgment in suspense, as to whether the documentary evidence supplied by the records of the Musical Society, is conclusive on the point of three distinct degrees having been worked in 1725, the inclination of my own judgment being to quite a contrary effect. Also, before proceeding any further with my general argument, it will be convenient to remark that *if* three distinct steps of Masonry *were* known and practised by any Lodge or set of brethren in 1725, there is not a particle of evidence from which we might infer a priority of communication to the probationer either of what is now the first degree or the second.

The Quarterly Communication of the Grand Lodge, held November 27th, 1725, was attended by the officers of forty-nine Lodges, a number vastly in excess of any previous record of a similar character, and which does not reach the same figures until the November meeting of 1732. At this meeting—"A Motion being made that such part of the 13th Article of the Gen^l Regulations relating to the making of Ma^{rs} only at a Quarterly Court may be repealed, and that the Ma^{rs} of Each Lodge, with the consent of his Wardens and the Majority of the Brethren, being Ma^{rs} may make Ma^{rs} at their discretion. Agreed, *Nem Con.*"

The reference, it will be observed, is to "Masters" only, which, in the absence of any other confirmative evidence, would be sufficient to show that *two* degrees and not *three* were plainly indicated in the phraseology of O.R. XIII.

I next pass to St. John's day, December 27th, 1726, when a speech was delivered by Dr. FRANCIS DRAKE, as Junior Grand Warden of York. The famous author of *Eboracum*

speaks of *E. P.*, *J. C.*, and *M. M.*, meaning, no doubt, Entered Apprentices, Fellow Crafts, and Master Masons, and from this has been inferred that the three degrees so named were known and practised at York in 1726. But, as it appears to myself, DRAKE had evidently constructed an imaginary tri-gradal system, from a mis-reading of JAMES ANDERSON'S ambiguous expressions in O.R. XIII. Both before and after 1726, as the existing records show, there was an extreme simplicity of ceremonial under the body which is best known as the "Grand Lodge of ALL England, at York." Candidates were merely "sworn and admitted," or "admitted and sworn."

In the following year the earliest existing minutes of an English *regular* Lodge (at the SWAN AND RUMMER, Finch Lane, London), contain—under April 27th, 1727—the following:—"Order'd That a Lodge of *Masters* be summon'd for Fryday next at 6 o'clock on special Affairs." Two days later, four gentlemen "were admitted Masters."

There is no earlier mention of a "Masters' Lodge."

Two degrees—the making of Masons and the passing of Masters—continued to be worked by the Lodge at the SWAN AND RUMMER, until the close of the extracts (given by Bro. Hughan from its records), in 1734 (*A.Q.C.* x., 135). There are circumstances, however, connected with the history of this Lodge, apart from the actual evidence relating to the system of degrees, upon which I must briefly dwell, as they afford additional—and, in my own opinion, conclusive—testimony with regard to the weight and authority which the Minutes of the body of Masons, meeting at the SWAN AND RUMMER in 1726-34, possess.

The Lodge was constituted by DR. DESAGULIERS, as Deputy Grand Master, on February 3rd, 1726, the first Master being MARTIN O'CONNOR. A few months later—June 8th—Dr. DESAGULIERS, and the EARL OF INCHQUIN, being present, LORD KINSALE, the Hon. JAMES KING and others,—“Were admitted into the Society of Free Masonry & made by the Deputy Grand Master.”

The Hon. JAMES KING, who became LORD KINGSTON in 1727, was Grand Master of England in 1728, and he appointed MARTIN O'CONNOR, the first Master of his "Mother Lodge," his Junior Grand Warden.

LORD KINGSTON was afterwards the last Grand Master of the GRAND LODGE OF MUNSTER (1731), and he occupied the chair of the GRAND LODGE OF IRELAND, in 1731, 1735 and 1745.

At one of the meetings of the Lodge at the SWAN AND RUMMER, in 1727, when LORD INCHQUIN, Grand Master, and also Dr. DESAGULIERS were present, eight gentlemen were "admitted." Among the numerous visitors who attended the Lodge, were GEORGE PAYNE, the second Grand Master; A. CHOKE, D.G.M., 1727; N. BLACKERBY, D.G.M., 1727-30; T. BATSON, D.G.M., 1731-33; W. READ, G. Sec., 1727-33; J. REVIS, G. Sec., 1734-56; and a "Mr. SAML. PRITCHARD, Harry y^e 8th head, of 7 Dyalls," whose presence is recorded under Sept. 25th, 1728. For the foregoing particulars I am indebted to Bro. HUGHAN'S various sketches of the Lodge, which are to be found in "*An Old Master's Lodge*," the *Addenda* to his *English Rite*, and the *Transactions* of No. 2076 (*A.Q.C.* x., 127-36). I do not think we could have any stronger evidence, with regard to the *number* of degrees that were worked in England from 1727 to 1734, according to the system recognized by, and prevailing under the Grand Lodge. The last name on the list of visitors may or may not have been that of the author of "*Masonry Dissected*." But though PRITCHARD has attained a wide-world notoriety in connection with that publication, there is no mention of him *aliunde*, except it is to be found among the records of the Lodge at the SWAN AND RUMMER, under the year 1728.

Unless, therefore, the author of the Spurious Ritual which deals for the first time with an alleged system of *three* degrees, was present at the "Mother Lodge" of LORD KINGSTON, the Grand Master of 1729, there is nothing to corroborate the "affidavit" of the author of *Masonry Dissected*, that he was a "late Member of a Constituted Lodge." While, on the other hand, if the "Dissector" actually visited the Lodge at the SWAN AND RUMMER, it is quite clear that the "manner of working" which his pamphlet professes to disclose, was something very different from the methods of communicating the secrets of Masonry, as practised under the eyes of the Deputy Grand Master for 1726, and the Grand Masters for 1727 and 1729.

With the exception of the Minutes of the Musical Society (1725) and DRAKE'S Speech (1726), both of which I conceive must have received a tinge or colouring from a misapprehension of the real meaning of O.R. XIII., there is no reference whatever to *three* degrees until we reach the year 1730, when for the first time there is an allusion to a tri-gradal system which is devoid of ambiguity. Before, however, proceeding to that date, it is

essential to point out that the peace of the Masonic fraternity, or at least that portion of it represented by the adherents of the Grand Lodge, was greatly disturbed during the third decade of the eighteenth century, and particularly during the seven years that brought that period to a close. The authorities upon which this statement depends will be found collected in my literary portraits of the DUKE OF WHARTON and MARTIN CLARE, and are supplemented by some further references which were cited by the present writer, and also printed among the *Transactions* of No. 2076 (*A.Q.C.* iv., 33; viii., 114; x., 137). JAMES ANDERSON, however, was the person principally singled out for attack by the opponents, or as in many instances they professed to figure, the candid friends of the Grand Lodge. The cause of his unpopularity was, without doubt, the manner he had carried out, the mandate entrusted to him in 1721, which as he tells us in 1738 (*New Book of Constitutions* 113) was "to digest the Old Gothic Constitutions in a *new* and better Method" [*italics mine*]. In this statement, indeed, we have very possibly a sort of retrospective vindication by ANDERSON in 1738 of the "Method" pursued by him in 1721-23. There is also room for speculation whether, if we could read between the lines, the passage given above from the *Constitutions* of 1738, may not indicate that its compiler was profoundly dissatisfied at having been made the scapegoat on the occasion of the general dissatisfaction which arose in the Fraternity in connection with the *Constitutions* of 1723.

In *An Ode to the Grand Khaibar* (London, 1726), the author of the *Book of Constitutions*, who was a Scottish Presbyterian minister, is thus satirized:—

" So pleas'd with Dreams the MASONS seem,
To tell their Tales once more they venture;
And find an Author worthy them,
From Sense and Genius a Dissenter."

But the most violent of all the lampoons that were launched with a view to holding up ANDERSON to ridicule and contempt was HOGARTH'S well-known plate, *The Mystery of Masonry, brought to light by the Gormogons*. This is of uncertain date, but probably appeared either shortly before or shortly after the pamphlet to which I have last referred. A reproduction of this plate was given in our Lodge *Transactions* for 1895 (*A.Q.C.* viii., 139). But the book held out by the figure at the entrance to the tavern, which I then thought must have been intended to represent *the Grand Mystery of the Freemasons Discover'd* (1724), I now consider may have been meant to typify the *Constitutions* of 1723. The "Ladders, Halters, Drawn Swords, and Dark Rooms" also presented to our view in the plate, are noticed it is true in the "Letters" appended to the "Grand Mystery," but the allusions to them are avowedly taken from the *Plain Dealer* of September 14th, 1724. This journal assumes the role of a "candid friend," and adjures the Grand Master to put a stop to proceedings which "have spread Confusion and Terror." Here we have, I think, a general protest against the policy pursued by the Grand Lodge—which, as we have seen, was also severely criticised by Dr. STUKELEY—and among the subjects of particular complaint must have been, in my own judgment, the *New Law*—as it was evidently supposed to be—contained in the ill-chosen and oft-quoted terms of Old Regulation XIII.

The Scottish *tilles* introduced in 1723 must have been regarded by many persons as importing Scottish *degrees*, and the germ may perhaps be distinguishable, at this early period, of what afterwards blossomed into the myriads of degrees, which, with similar unreality, have been largely supposed to derive their origin from Scotland. It is, moreover, inherently probable that the working of the "Masters' Part" had fallen into comparative disuse among the Lodges in general, when for reasons that are withheld from us, but with respect to which I have hazarded two more or less plausible conjectures, it was ordered that "unless by a dispensation," the higher ceremony or (as commonly supposed) *ceremonies*, should take place in the Grand Lodge only.

In this way additional elements of mystery may have gathered round the imaginary tri-gradal and *Scottish* system evolved out of a mis-reading of O.R. XIII. (1723), and of which we see the ultimate result in a widely-spread delusion that Scotland was the original home of higher and more sublime degrees that were known and practised elsewhere by the Masonic Craft.

The second group of Spurious Rituals have their leading exemplars in two publications that appeared in 1730, one, *The Mystery of Free-Masonry*, which without any author's name was printed in the *Daily Journal* of August 15th; and the other, "*Masonry Dissected*," by SAMUEL PRICHARD, late Member of a Constituted Lodge, was advertised for sale in the same newspaper on October 20th, 1730. In the earlier catechism *two* degrees, and in the later one *three*, are described.

The *Mystery of Free-Masonry* we find referred to in the Minutes of the Grand Lodge, under August 28th, 1730 :—" DR. DESAGULIERS stood up and (taking notice of a printed Paper lately published and dispersed about the Town, and since inserted in the News Papers, pretending to discover and reveal the Misteries of the Craft of Masonry) recommended several things to the consideration of the Grand Lodge, particularly the Resolution of the last Quarterly Communication [April 21st], for preventing any false brethren being admitted into regular Lodges, and such as call themselves Honorary Masons. The Deputy Grand Master seconded the Doctor, and proposed several rules to the Grand Lodge, to be observed in their respective Lodges, for their security against all open and Secret Enemies to the Craft."

The Resolution cited by DESAGULIERS as having been passed at the meeting of Grand Lodge held April 21st, has not been recorded.

Masonry Dissected, as we also learn from the same records, engaged the attention of the Grand Lodge on December 15th, of the same year :—" D.G.M. BLACKERBY took notice of a Pamphlet lately published by one PRICHARD, who pretends to have been made a regular Mason : In violation of the Obligation of a Mason w^{ch} he swears he has broke in order to do hurt to Masonry, and expressing himself with the utmost indignation against both him (Stiling him an Impostor) and of his Book as a foolish thing not to be regarded. But in order to prevent the Lodges being imposed upon by false Brethren or Imposters : Proposed, till otherwise Ordered by the Grand Lodge, that no Person whatsoever shall be admitted into Lodges unless some member of the Lodge there present shall vouch for such visiting Brother being a regular Mason, and the Member's Name to be entered against the Visitor's Name in the Lodge Book, which Proposal was unanimously agreed to."

There are no other allusions to the Spurious Rituals of Masonry in the existing records of the Grand Lodge. Nor do the passages quoted above from the minute-book of 1730, seem to imply that the governing Masonic body attached any particular importance either to the earlier or the later catechism of that year. The remarks indeed of DR. DESAGULIERS on August 28th, 1730, though prefaced with a reference to *The Mystery of Free-Masonry* (printed in the *Daily Journal* of August 15th) were chiefly directed against an association of which the following notification appeared in the *Daily Post* of December 17th :—" ALL the Brethren of the worthy Society of Honorary Free-Masons are hereby Summon'd and desir'd to meet at their General Lodge, held at the Prince of Orange Head in Jermyn-street, on the 23rd of this Instant December, at Five o'clock precisely, in order to elect a Master and Wardens for the year ensuing, and to consider of proper Ways and Means for the advancement of said Lodge, and the Honour and Dignity of MASONRY in general.

By Order of this Lodge, P. C. T. B. E. G."

The observations of D.G.M. BLACKERBY on December 15th (only two days before the publication of the manifesto last cited), were also apparently aimed in the main at "Honorary Free-Masons," whom (copying DESAGULIERS) he styles "false Brethren"; while the *Masonry Dissected* of SAMUEL PRICHARD is merely noticed, in order to be contemptuously described "as a foolish thing not to be regarded."

The meeting, however, of the Grand Lodge in April, 1730, at which a resolution was passed, *which has not been recorded*, appears to have been identified by some persons as the occasion on which the diversity of ceremonial that afterwards split the English Masons in two camps, had its origin. In other words, the Grand Lodge of England, by way of a counterblast to *Masonry Dissected*, is supposed by certain writers of the Craft to have sanctioned some "alterations in the established forms," and the date at which these "alterations" were agreed upon has (after a long period of doubt and uncertainty) been made to correspond with that of the Quarterly Communication *when the Resolution was passed which has not been recorded*.

Passing over the circumstance that PRICHARD'S pamphlet appeared too late in the year to have inspired the utterances of any speakers in the Grand Lodge at the meetings of either April or August, 1730; I shall so far slightly anticipate as to quote the 4th and last verse of "The Sword bearer's Song," which is given by DR. ANDERSON at page 211 of his *New Book of Constitutions* (1738):

"Then let us laugh, since we've impos'd
On those who make a Pother,
And cry, the Secret is disclos'd
By some false-hearted Brother;
The mighty SECRET's gain'd they boast,
From Post Boy and from Flying Boy" [Post ?]

It is scarcely open to doubt that if the opinions of other Masonic veterans who, like ANDERSON, had witnessed the successive publication of Spurious Rituals in 1723, 1724, and 1730, were available for our scrutiny, they would all be in accord with respect to the earliest printed form being in every respect the most interesting and noteworthy of the series. If, therefore, the idea of the Grand Lodge of England having at any time about 1717 and before 1738, altered or varied the Masonic ceremonies is ever to be accepted as falling within the limits of reasonable conjecture, it would seem, in my own judgment, that evidence (of which at the present moment there is not even a *scintilla*) must be forthcoming to establish that a Resolution "for preventing any false Brethren being admitted into regular Lodges" was not only passed but recorded in 1723.

The fourth edition of PRICHARD'S brochure, which appeared in November, 1730, was followed on December 15th by "*A Defence of Masonry; occasioned by a Pamphlet, call'd Masonry Dissected.*"

The work bore the name of no author, but was really written by MARTIN CLARE (afterwards D.G.M.) as the mouthpiece of the Grand Officers. The degrees then known and recognised are specified as those of "Enter'd Prentice," and "Fellow Craft" or "Master," a description which is in entire harmony with that given in the *Constitutions* of 1723 (O.R. XIII.), and all the Ritualistic evidence of that or any earlier period that has been handed down to us.

That two degrees only were sanctioned by the Grand Lodge in 1723, is made clear from the circumstance that at the constitution of a French Lodge in London on August 17th of that year by the EARL OF STRATHMORE, "*le Maitre, les Surveillants, les Compagnons, et les Apprentifs,*" are alone particularized by the Grand Master.

Soon after 1730, indeed, a system of three degrees crept slowly into use, of which the proximate cause appears to have been the influence exercised both directly and indirectly by the spurious ritual of SAMUEL PRICHARD. But there is nothing from which we may infer that a division of the old "Apprentice Part" into two moieties—each forming a distinct step or degree—had been approved by the Grand Lodge prior to the publication of the *New Book of Constitutions* in 1738.

Before, however, passing from the year 1730, it will be desirable to notice the Irish *Constitutions* published by JOHN PENNELL at Dublin, between the beginning of June and the end of August of that year. The book was not printed by the order or with the sanction of either of the Irish Grand Lodges then existing, nor was JOHN PENNELL a Grand Secretary at the time, though he attained that position in the Grand Lodge of Ireland on its re-organisation under LORD KINGSTON in 1731.

The work was reprinted in vol. i. of his *Cæmentaria Hibernica*, by DR. CHETWODE CRAWLEY who, in his editorial remarks, observes:—"In CHARGE IV. we trace the development of Degrees. . . In the interval between 1723 and 1730 the 'Masters' part' had become a Third Degree, and PENNELL makes the distinction clear between the Master of a Lodge and a Master Mason." The passage to which he refers runs as follows:—"No Master should take an Apprentice unless . . . having no Maim or Defect in his Body, that may render him incapable . . . of being made a Brother, and a Fellow Craft, and in due time a Master; and when qualify'd, he may arrive to the Honour of being Warden, then Master of a Lodge, then Grand Warden, and at length Grand Master" (p. 44). But in the very next paragraph of CHARGE IV. we read:—"No Brother can be a Master, Warden, or Deacon of a Lodge until he has pass'd the Part of a Fellow-Craft: And the Grand Master has Power to chuse his own Deputy, who must likewise have pass'd the Part of a Fellow-Craft" (*Ibid.*) Throughout the entire book, except in the first paragraph of CHARGE IV. (as above cited), no higher degree (than Fellow Craft) is referred to, and "In the Manner of Constituting a New Lodge," the expression:—"The Candidates or the new Master and Wardens, being yet among the Fellow-Craft," will be found.

PENNELL in 1730, like DRAKE in 1726, was evidently misled by the ambiguous language of ANDERSON in O.R. XIII. (1723), but the words:—"In due time a Master" (CHARGE IV., paragraph 1), upon which DR. CRAWLEY has erected his hypothesis of a third degree, entirely disappear, as we shall presently see in the next edition of the Irish *Constitutions*, printed with the sanction of the Grand Lodge and Grand Officers of 1735.

1731.—In this year, as we are informed by original documents in the archives of the Grand Lodge of Sweden, COUNT A. E. WREDE SPARRE was made an Apprentice at Paris on May 4th, a Fellow-Craft on November 16th, and a Master Mason in 1733. The earliest foreign edition of *Masonry Dissected* of which anything definite is known, was published at Utrecht in 1733, and a copy is preserved in the Library of the Grand

Lodge of Holland at the Hague. It seems to myself, however, that an earlier translation of PRICHARD's pamphlet must have been printed in France, either late in 1730 or at the beginning of 1731, and I see no other way of accounting for the communication of the secrets of the "Apprentice Part," in two steps, to COUNT WREDE SPARRE, at Paris, in the latter year, that is if the documents in the Swedish archives are to be implicitly relied upon.

1732.—The degrees worked at this date are referred to in the Rawlinson collection at the Bodleian Library. The extracts I shall next give, are taken from the By-laws of No. 71, held at the ROSE, Cheapside, and those of No. 83, meeting at the THREE TUNS, West Smithfield, both being London Lodges. According to the code of No. 71: "On being Initiated as a Mason . . . the Person to pay two Pounds seven Shillings at his Making . . . Also when this Lodge shall think Convenient to confer the Superiour Degree of Masonry upon him he shall pay five Shillings more."

The 6th By-law of No. 83 runs: "That all & every Person, or Persons recommended and Accepted as above, shall pay for his or their making the Sum of Three Pounds five Shillings, and for his admittance the Sum of five Shillings, and every Brother who shall pass the Degrees of F.C. & M. shall pay the further Sum of Seven Shillings and sixpence."

Lodge No. 71, it will be observed, practised a system of *two* degrees which (if we hold our judgment in suspense with respect to what is to be legitimately inferred from the Minutes of the Musical Society, the *Speech* of DR. DRAKE, and the *Constitutions* of JOHN PENNELL), is referred to in *all* the documentary evidence beginning in 1723, and ending with the earliest catechism (*The Mystery of Free-Masonry*) printed in 1730. On the other hand, it is equally apparent that *three* steps of Masonry were known and practised in No. 83.

This number, however (if we again leave out of sight for a moment the Minutes of 1725, the *Speech* of 1726, and the *Irish Manual* of 1730), is first given by SAMUEL PRICHARD in his pamphlet of October 20th, 1730, where also (without any reservation of judgment being necessary) we meet with what is absolutely the very earliest declaration which professes to define the order of progression of the *new* first and second degrees.

That the system practised by No. 71, however, was that recognised and sanctioned by the Grand Lodge in 1732, there cannot be a doubt, as I have already shewn by a reference to the proceedings at the constitution of a French Lodge in London in that year, and I shall also remind the reader of the records of the Lodge at the SWAN AND RUMMER (1726-34) cited on a previous page, and bespeak his attention to the Minutes of a Lodge at Lincoln (1732-42) which will be laid under contribution as we proceed.

1733.—The earliest *published* reference to a "Masters' Lodge," or a "Master Masons' Lodge," occurs in DR. RAWLINSON'S List of Lodges of this year, at the end of which are the following entries:—

"115. Devil Tavern, Temple Bar, a SCOTCH MASONS' LODGE.

"116. Bear and Harrow, in the Butcher Row, a MASTER MASONS' LODGE."

These Lodges (No. 115 being described as "SCOTTS MASON LODGE,") are shewn, with the addition of two others, by PINE, in his Engraved List of 1734, one of which—No. 117—is styled a "Master Masons," and the other—No. 120—a "MASTERS' LODGE."

In his remarkable paper on "MASTERS' LODGES," read by the late JOHN LANE before the QUATUOR CORONATI LODGE (*A.Q.C.* i., 167-73), our deeply lamented Brother (from whose far-seeing essay I am transcribing) observes:—"I include the 'SCOTT'S MASONS,' or 'SCOTCH MASON'S LODGE' for two reasons: *Firstly*, in the hope that further information may yet be gleaned in relation to its character as a Lodge superior to the Fellow Crafts, whether as a MASTER MASONS' LODGE *or otherwise*; and *secondly*, because it furnishes a striking analogy, in many particulars, to the three 'MASTER MASONS' or 'MASTERS LODGES,' with which it was contemporary." Next, after quoting from myself with respect to the supposed origin of the "SCOTT'S DEGREES" (*Hist. of F.* iii., 92), he proceeds:—"Now if 'SCOTT'S' degrees or 'SCOTT'S LODGES' originated first in France, and that not until 1740, two questions naturally arise. (1) Where did our English brethren obtain the distinctive appellation of a 'SCOTCH' or 'SCOTT'S MASONS' LODGE?' and (2) what constituted its peculiarity in 1733?"

In the opinion of Bro. LANE the *four* Lodges, Nos. 115-17 and 120, "were *not* separate organizations, but were composed of members of 'General' Lodges who, for the purpose of communicating the Master Masons' degree, obtained the sanction of the Grand Lodge so to act and work under the appropriate designation of 'MASTERS' LODGES.'"

"Of this I am convinced," says the same writer, at the close of his paper, "that these four Lodges were of a character very different to any others that preceded or followed them, the records shewing that they have never had an exact parallel or counterpart before or since."

After this there were other "MASTERS' LODGES" whose business it evidently was to exemplify the working of what is now the *third*, but more often than not for a long period immediately following the date we have just reached (1733), was the *only* other ceremony worked in the Lodges additional to that which took place at the "making" of a new brother. The problem, however, which baffled the late Bro. LANE, namely, the circumstance that one of the four associations enumerated by him—No. 115—was designated "by the peculiar, and as yet unexplained, name of a 'SCOTT'S MASONS' LODGE,'" is one upon which a few further words must be said. The explanation, as it has recently seemed probable to myself, may, perhaps, be found in the theory I have already foreshadowed, namely, that the introduction by ANDERSON into English Masonry (1723) of the terms Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft, and Master Mason, from the vocabulary of the Northern Kingdom, was a potent factor not only in the expansion of the ancient ceremonies of the Craft, but also in the fabrication of the vast host of "additional" degrees which were labelled as being of *Scottish* origin—a practice that lasted until the dawn of the century which has just passed away.

The minutes of the present "OLD KING'S ARMS LODGE," No. 28 (*then* No. 26), shew that in October, 1733, three brethren "made it their joynt Request to the Lodge that they would be pleased, in regard to the Master Lodge . . . just opening, that they might have the favor of being admitted to that dignity," which is afterwards referred to as "this High Order of Masonry." In the same year Bro. BENTLEY presented "the members both of the *Fellow Craft* and *Masters* with a form for the summonses. LORD VERE BERTIE and WM TODD on the same day were severally admitted in form ff and E.P."; the order of the degrees being thus curiously transposed (Hughan, *Add. to Eng. Rite*, 4). In November, 1734, "An Invitation from the MASTERS' LODGE to the Masters of the CONSTITUTED LODGE to become members, or at least Visitors thereof, was proposed and affectionately recommended from the Chair, to which the members seemed very attentive." These references, to quote from some further remarks by the late JOHN LANE on a subject which his own writings had done so much to illuminate, "are of especial value, as tending to throw light upon the introduction of the Third Degree as an entirely new ceremony." The same gifted student then expresses his opinion that the allusions under November 1734, "to the MASTERS' LODGE and to the Masters of the CONSTITUTED LODGE, must relate to two separate and distinct organizations, the latter being the KING'S ARMS LODGE, then meeting at the KING'S ARMS, Strand, and the former being in all probability one of the then newly organised MASTERS' LODGES, No. 117," (*A.Q.C.* xii., 179).

At Bath, on May 18th, 1733, on the occasion of a pre-existing Masonic body being constituted as a *regular* Lodge, the presence is recorded, besides that of the Master and Wardens, of three fellow Crafts, Six Masters, and four "Pass'd Masters." The distinction drawn between the two sets of Masters appears to point to an epoch of confusion, when the old names were only beginning to give place to the new ones, at least in the Country Lodges.

A little later, October 2nd, at a meeting of a Lodge at Lincoln there were present SIR CECIL WRAY, Baronet, Master, with other members, and six visitors (Esquires), "When BROTHER CLARE'S Discourse concerning PRITCHARD, as also . . . our By-Laws were read."

1734.—August 6th, according to the minutes of the same Lodge, "BROTHER CLARE'S Discourse relating to P—D was read." At this date SIR CECIL WRAY, a friend of MARTIN CLARE, author of the *Defence of Masonry*, was Deputy Grand Master. The records only mention two degrees,—those of Apprentice and Master—as being worked by the Lincoln Masons of 1732-42. They also indicate that the higher step was conferred in a Lodge of Masters, and that (in 1734) it was regarded as a necessary qualification for a Warden's chair.

1735.—A *Pocket Companion for Free-Masons* was published by WILLIAM SMITH at London and Dublin, the English edition probably in December 1734, and the Irish one in May, 1735. The latter, which has been reprinted by DR. CHETWODE CRAWLEY (*Caem. Hib.* ii.), was printed with the approval and recommendation of the Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, Grand Wardens, and Grand Lodge of Ireland. This is virtually a *Book of Constitutions*, and in the 1Vth Charge it is laid down that the Apprentice must have

no defect "that might render him incapable . . . of being made a Brother, and then a Fellow-Craft in due time." But the words that follow on—after "Fellow-Craft"—in the corresponding passage in PENNELL'S work (1730), namely, "and in due time a Master," are omitted. Also, in the *Pocket Companion*, the sections containing the "General Regulations" and "the Manner of Constituting a New Lodge," are in entire harmony with the portion of the book embracing The CHARGES of a FREE-MASON, in referring to the degree of a Fellow-Craft as being the highest recognized at that time.

This seems to indicate very clearly that the entry in Pennell's book relating to the existence of a MASTER'S in addition to a FELLOW-CRAFT'S degree, was altogether due to an erroneous impression of that author, founded on a misapprehension of the *Scottish* operative terms used by Anderson in 1723.

If a *third* degree had actually been present to the minds of the *Irish* Grand Officers in 1730, it is impossible to conceive that the step of Fellow-Craft would have been the highest known to their successors in 1735.

In SCOTLAND, the minutes of Lodge St. CUTHBERT, Kirkeudbright, present No. 41, record:—"Monday, Feby. 3rd, 1735," that a collector of Customs, an Ensign, and a Surgeon's Mate "were Entered Prentices to the Lodge."

"Feby. 6th, 1735, The above Gentlemen Entered Fellows of Craft."

"Feby. 7th.—The above Gentlemen made Masters."

"The last entry," observes Bro. James Smith, "is the earliest reference to the Third Degree in Scotland, the Lodge of CANONGATE KILWINNING No. 2, Edinburgh, coming next on 31st March, and the Lodge of GLASGOW KILWINNING No. 4, following, a day later, on 1st April, 1735," (*Freemasonry in Galloway*, 7).

Returning to English Masonry, on June 24th, 1735, an independent Lodge in the village of Swalwell, Durham, accepted a "deputation" from the Grand Lodge. In the records there appear "Orders" of various kinds, all written by the same clear hand. The 8th Penal "Order" runs: "If any be found not faithfully to keep and maintain the 3 fraternal signs, and all points of fellowship, and principal matters relating to the secret Craft, each offence, penalty 10 - 10 - 00" (*Mas. Mag.* iii., 82). The date from which this speaks rests on conjecture, and in the absence of positive evidence, I can only cite the Swalwell "Orders" as being *in use* as a code of laws in 1735. But the 8th "Penal Order" shows that when it was enacted (a point on which antiquaries are at variance), either three degrees, or the two previously known, were worked in an *Operative* Lodge.

1736.—HERAULT, the Lieutenant of Police at Paris, having obtained what is described as a translation of PRICHARD'S pamphlet, published it as an exposure of Freemasonry, and the *French* tract was further translated into German and again printed, also in 1736. The original, in both instances, on which both copies are based, is stated (in the German pamphlet) to have been the *fifth* English Edition of *Masonry Dissected*.

1737.—BARON C. F. SCHEFFER, afterwards the first Grand Master of Sweden, was initiated at Paris, on September 10th, and obtained there the other two St. John's, as well as two Scottish degrees. He was granted by "CHARLES RADCLYFFE, COUNT DERWENTWATER, Grand Master of the Freemasons of France," a Deputation, dated November 25th, empowering him to constitute Lodges in Sweden, and "to accept candidates to the three first degrees." The foregoing statements are given on the authority of the Swedish documents cited under the year 1731.

The celebrated Oration of the CHEVALIER RAMSAY was delivered on March 21st, 1737. On its many points of interest I must not linger. To discuss them, however briefly, would absorb the whole of my remaining space. The "Speech" itself will be found in my *History of Freemasonry* (iii., 84-89), and I shall only remark, in the present paper, that if BARON SCHEFFER really received two so-called "Scottish Degrees" at Paris, in 1737, the position is no longer tenable, that as a direct consequence of RAMSAY'S "Oration" the legions of novelties assuming to be of Scottish origin sprang into existence about the year 1740 in all parts of France. Indeed, a far earlier date for their inception must be assigned, though I am unable to point in any direction for a possible solution of the mystery, except it be to the evidence—such as it is—which has been already given under the year 1733.

Four editions of *Masonry Dissected* were published in 1730. The dates of the *fifth* and *sixth* are unknown, but a *seventh* was printed in 1737.

1738.—The tract previously referred to as having been published at Paris by HERAULT in 1736, was translated into English, and many independent versions of it were circulated in 1738. The piece was printed in *Read's Journal* of January 21st, the *Gentleman's Magazine*. (viii., 54), and Boyer's *Political State of Great Britain* (lv., 78). It was also published in

pamphlet form under the title of "*Masonry Further Dissected*," and according to the title-page was "Faithfully Englished from the French Original just publish'd at Paris by the Permission and Privilege of M. DE HARRAUT, Lieutenant-General of Police." This tract, of which an interesting description has been given by DR. CHETWODE CRAWLEY (*A.Q.C.* ix., 84 ; xiii., 149), I have not seen, but the other English versions of the HÉRAULT print, above cited, I have perused and compared. They are virtually identical, and have no affinity whatever with the *Masonry Dissected* of SAMUEL PRICHARD. What HÉRAULT gives is not a catechism at all, but an account of the ceremony at the reception of a Freemason. The narrative proceeds on the same lines as those with which we have become familiar from the *Masons' Examination* of 1723, and the *Mystery of Free-Masonry* of 1730 ; or, in other words, a picture is presented of a "making" (or initiation) *before* the secrets of what are *now* the first and second degrees were disjoined. But the alleged revelation of 1736 differs in one material respect from the Spurious Rituals to which I have last referred. It contains no allusion whatever either in precise terms or by necessary implications to the "Masters' Part." One ceremony is alone mentioned, and while the HÉRAULT print only speaks from the year 1736, it is at least certain that its contents were derived from an *English* statement (or declaration) of earlier date, expressed either orally or in documentary form. Indeed, there seems to myself good reason for supposing that the English original might be even older than the Masonic Law of 1723 (O.R. XIII.) ; that is to say, before the virtual revival of the "Masters' Part" by the legislation of that year. The following "Note," it will be recollected, occurs in the *Grand Mystery of Free-Masonry* (1730)—"There is not one Mason in a Hundred that will be at the Expence to pass the Masters' Part, except it be for Interest."

The working of the "Superior Degree" in Masonry had evidently fallen into comparative disuse in 1717-23, and the HÉRAULT tract may, I think, with fair reason, be regarded as—to some extent—a pale reflection of the procedure at the making of a Mason (or working of the "Apprentice Part") during the early years of the Grand Lodge, and which, though gradually superseded by newer methods, did not absolutely die out until the second half of the eighteenth century. The secrets of the Masonry generally known and ordinarily practised in 1723 were communicated in a single ceremony. "New Men" at their entrance were then as much instructed through the eye as through the ear, and when the necessity was assumed to have arisen for a determination of the order of procedure in which the severed moieties of the "Apprentice Part" should be conferred, what was *seen* as well as what was *heard* by the candidate during the progress of the *undivided* ceremony, must have almost certainly influenced the ultimate decision. The choice of the Grand Lodge of England, in my own judgment, inclined in the direction which was most consistent with the symbolic traditions that had come down to it. But without labouring the point, or in other words, indulging in more or less plausible conjecture, at least so much may be affirmed, that *if* the original degree of Apprentice could *legitimately* be split into two parts, it was equally open to all three of the Grand Lodges—English, Irish and Scottish—to determine the sequence in which those "parts" should be communicated.

But the leading event in the year which has been last reached, was the appearance of the "*New Book of Constitutions*." Two degrees are mentioned by ANDERSON in the edition of 1723, and three in the edition for 1738. Entered Apprentice, and Fellow Craft or Master, were the degrees or steps of 1723 ; and Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft, and Master, were those of 1738.

The following appears in the *New Book of Constitutions* (1738)—

OLD REGULATIONS.

XIII.—Apprentices must be admitted Fellow Crafts and Masters only here, unless by a Dispensation from the Grand Master.

NEW REGULATIONS.

On 22 Nov. 1725

XIII.—The Master of a Lodge, with his Wardens and a competent Number of the Lodge assembled in due Form, can make Masters and Fellows at Discretion.

The above, indeed, are not reproductions, but falsifications of the true wording of O.R. XIII., and of the *actual Resolution* passed by the Grand Lodge on the 27th (not the 22nd) of November, 1725. They were generally supposed, however, and the delusion lasted until our own day, if indeed it is yet quite extinct, to reflect with fidelity, though in a manner devoid of ambiguity, the true position of the Grand Lodge in 1723 and 1725, with regard to the *number* and *descriptions* of the degrees.

It is the custom of most people to consult a work of reference *in its latest form*. To this rule the Freemasons have not proved an exception, and the *second* edition of ANDERSON'S *Constitutions*—styled with lamentable accuracy the “basis of Masonic history”—was universally copied from and relied upon in preference to the *first*.

The precise circumstances under which an expansion of the original system of degrees was authorised, or perhaps it would be better to say *regulated*, by the earliest of Grand Lodges, have not been recorded, but there is a sufficiency of evidence from which the broad facts of the case become distinguishable. The governing body of English Masonry evidently tried to combat the *new* doctrine of which SAMUEL PRICHARD was the High Priest, by having the “Discourse” of MARTIN CLARE read in the Lodges—and doubtless in other ways. But finding that the novelty had taken root, and there can be no doubt that the seed from which *Masonry Dissected* ultimately germinated, had been sown by ANDERSON in 1723 (O.R. XIII.), the Grand Lodge, it is more than probable, felt bound to *regulate* a movement which it was unable to *suppress*. *Three* steps, therefore, were declared to exist in the *Constitutions* of 1738, and the order of their precedence was determined by the Grand Officers, in the manner which appeared to them to be in the greatest harmony with the ancient and symbolic traditions of the Craft.

The *second* edition of the *Constitutions*, like the *first*, was the cause of serious trouble in the Lodges, and in each case the discontent appears to have been at its height about a year after the publication of the work. In 1739, the re-arrangement of the degrees gave offence, not only to brethren who were working in the old way, *i.e.*, according to the system of *two* degrees as existing prior to and after 1717; but also to all those practising *three* ceremonies, who followed the method of conferring them as laid down in PRICHARD'S Spurious Ritual of 1730. There were other causes which tended to widen the breach between the Masons who were submissive and those who were disobedient to the mandates of the Grand Lodge. The principal of these was a second tampering with the “Masons' Creed,” which, *at a later period*, caused a further divergency of procedure between the *two* parties into which the English Freemasons ultimately became separated. The schism, however, did not assume form and cohesion until many years after the promulgation of the New CHARGES and REGULATIONS of 1738, though for reasons that will be discussed on a later page, the disunion of the English Craft, which lasted for more than half a century, was long supposed to have broken into open flame in 1739.

In 1740, the so-called “SCOTS' DEGREES” attained great prominence on the Continent, and the ROYAL ARCH, which may be regarded as one of them—though whether of British origin or an exotic remains unknown—is stated by DR. DASSIGNY, in his *Serious and Impartial Inquiry* (1744), to have been known and practised at York *about* the same year. But the “SCOTS' DEGREES” as a whole, lie outside the scope of my present paper, nor shall I have much more to say about the ROYAL ARCH. *So far as the evidence extends*, the only degrees worked (or known) in the British Isles down to and inclusive of 1738 were the present *three* of the Craft, and the manner of their progression from the *two* of 1723, to their existing number and sequence, it has been my leading object—up to the point we have now reached—to portray.

I have stated above, that of the creation of *new* Masonic steps, down to 1738, there is no *proof*, but it is possible, and indeed highly probable, that some forms of the “*additional*” or “SCOTS” degrees, which were destined at a later period to emerge into the light of history, may have existed in or prior to that year, though only worked casually, or, as it were, sporadically, in the Lodges.

IV.

1740—1813.

*Time, as he courses onward, still unrolls
The volume of concealment.*—S. T. COLERIDGE.

“*The Westminster Journal; or, New Weekly Miscellany*,” of May 5th, 1742, has a curious Manifesto of the “SCALD-MISERABLE-MASONS,” a Society claiming—like the GORMOGONS of older date—to have been founded by “Brethren” who “have lately forsook the gross Errors and Follies of *Free-Masonry*.” The SCALD MISERABLES profess to reveal the secrets of the Freemasons, and *two* descriptions of the form (or forms) observed at the admission of a New Comer are given in the newspaper. One of these—which is meant to point to the procedure under the Grand Lodge—specifies three distinct steps—Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft, and Master (or Master Mason), and the sequence in which the first two are referred to, is the reverse of the order of priority laid down in PRICHARD'S SPURIOUS RITUAL of 1730.

After this follow the words :—" That I may shew equal Impartiality to both Sides, I shall here reprint, without Alteration, a Piece that has been public for some years."

We are then presented with a reproduction of the *Mystery of Free-Masonry* (1730), which mentions *two* degrees only, those of Entered Apprentice and Master.

The Westminster Journal (1742) shows clearly enough that the *old* method of communicating the Secrets of Masonry had not been wholly superseded by the *new* one : also, it removes any doubt as to what had been the *original* decision of the earliest of Grand Lodges, when, for reasons that were deemed sufficient by that body, it was thought expedient to re-model the *manner* of conferring the degrees.

The mock processions carried out by the SCALD MISERABLES, in ridicule of the FREEMASONS, must have cost a considerable amount of money, and there is room for speculation whether there was any organised body by whom the expense was defrayed. The DUKE OF WHARTON and the GORMOGONS who sought to undermine the authority of the Grand Lodge in 1724, were of Jacobite faction, and so may have been the SCALD MISERABLES of 1742.

A few words may be appropriate before passing from the Spurious Rituals of the first and second to those of the third group. In pre-historic times, that is to say, before the era of Grand Lodges, and certainly down to 1723, it may, I think, be assumed that in some, but not all, of the *English* Lodges—for in many, no doubt, the ancient Symbolism of Masonry had sunk to the level of the ordinary artisan—the Apprentice, at his admission, received what are *now* the first and second steps. Sometimes the secrets were imparted according to one order of succession, and sometimes the sequence in which they were communicated was reversed. But *all* the Symbolical instruction appertaining to the "Apprentice Part" was given on the same night. After the appearance of "*Masonry Dissected*" (1730), we first hear of *three* degrees being worked in one of the Regular Lodges (1732).

The "Master's Part" was apparently very little practised when DR. STUKELEY was made a Freemason (1721), and it is probable that a desire to preserve the COPE STONE of Ancient Masonry from falling into utter decay, rather than any wish to lessen the privileges of the private Lodges, was the real motive of the legislation requiring the exemplification of the degree to be exclusively conducted in the Grand Lodge (*Constit.* 1723).

Considerable variety in the method of communicating the secrets of pure and ancient Masonry (after the recognition of three degrees by the Grand Lodge of England in 1738), occurred not only in the British Isles, but also abroad. PRICHARD's work, which early in the forties had been translated into several languages, was freely made use of on the Continent, but as may be gathered from *Le Secret des Francs Maçons*, and the *Catechisme des Francs Maçons* of 1744, *L'Ordre Trahi* of 1745, and other tracts of a similar kind, the sequence of the degrees as given by PRICHARD had been discarded for that which was supposed to have met with the approval of the Grand Lodge.

The number of French pamphlets which profess to reveal the secrets of Masonry is very large. Some are of native origin, others draw their inspiration—if not their exact wording—from British models, and not a few leave us in uncertainty as to whether, in the first instance, they were intended to reflect the proceedings of the English Masons or the French. These books supplied a much needed impetus to the flagging invention of the fabricators of a new set (or third group) of Spurious Rituals, which were published in London, at dates ranging from the beginning of the second half of the eighteenth century down to its close.

The degrees practised as well as the Rituals published in the two countries seem to have been interchangeable, and again there will be a conflict of opinion as to whether in particular instances, certain ceremonies originated in Great Britain, or whether they were borrowed from France.

For example, to glean from the records of three English Lodges, in every case under the year 1746 :—

January 8th.—" Bro. THOMAS NAISH and JOHN BURGE were this day made SCOTCH MASTERS, and paid for making 2s. 6d. each."—*Lodge at Bath, No. 101.*

July 1st.—It was " Enacted at a Grand Lodge, That no Brother Mason should be admitted into the dignity of a HIGHRODIAM," for less than 2s. 6d., or into that of " DOMASKIN or FORIN " for less than 5s. Then follows : " N.B. The ENGLISH MASTERS to pay for entering into the said Mastership 2s. 6d. per majority."—*Lodge at Swalwell, No. 117.*

October 19th.—“ At this lodge were made SCOTTS MASONS, five brethren of the Lodge ” (including the R.W.M.).—*Lodge at Salisbury, No. 97.*

To the above may be added, that five members of the *Lodge at Bath, No. 101*, were made “ SCOTCH MASONS,” November 27th, 1754; also, that on December 1st, 1756, the degree of HARODIM was conferred on a Master Mason, in the present PHENIX LODGE, Sunderland, No. 94, (W. Logan, *History of St. John's Lodge, No. 80*).

All the degrees referred to in the foregoing extracts, are generally regarded as falling within the sphere of what for want of any better title is commonly known as “ SCOTS,” in contradistinction to (real) SCOTTISH Masonry. But whether they were imported from the Continent, or of native growth, is a point which in the absence of further evidence must remain undecided. That HIGHRODIAM was a corruption of HARODIM is at least a plausible conjecture, but with regard to the meaning of DOMASKIN or FORIN, I am unprepared with a conjecture of any kind, either “ plausible ” or the reverse. Taken, however, as a whole, the documentary evidence last presented, namely, the three entries of 1746, together with the supplementary ones of 1754 and 1756, will justify a brief *excursus* concerning the “ SCOTS ” degrees which, to the extent that their consideration falls within the scope of the present paper, will be more conveniently examined in immediate connection with the testimony just adduced, than if treated in strict chronological sequence, according to the dates on which the evidence relating to them was published to the world.

“ You will excuse me if I do not strictly confine myself to narration; but now and then intersperse such reflections as may offer while I am writing.”—JOHN NEWTON.

With the records of the Swalwell Lodge—in their reference to “ the dignity of a HIGHRODIAM ”—those of the ROYAL ORDER OF SCOTLAND, and the “ history ”—such as it is—of the RITE OF PERFECTION or HÉRÉDOM, invite a comparison.

In 1750, there were five Chapters of the ROYAL ORDER in London, and one at Deptford. Three are said in the records to have existed from time immemorial, and the other two to have been constituted in 1743 and 1744 respectively. There was a “ Grand Lodge ” and the “ Grand Master of the H. R. D. M. [HÉRÉDOM], and K. L. W. N. N.” [Kilwinning], in one of the MSS., sets forth that he had held office since 1741. In the opinion of Bro. D. M. LYON, “ the Grand Lodge of London was a self-constituted body,” and he also tells us that, “ of the existence in Scotland of any branch of the Order prior to 1754, there is not a particle of evidence ” (*Hist. Lodge of Edinburgh, ch. xxxii.*).

The RITE OF PERFECTION or HÉRÉDOM (in France) was composed of the three Craft degrees and twenty-two others, the 18th being the “ ROSE CROIX,” and the 25th the “ PRINCE OF THE ROYAL SECRET.” “ Of the authors or origins,” says the late ALBERT PIKE, “ or separate working, before the organization of the RITE, of any except two or three of the twenty-two Degrees, no information whatever has come down to us; and little reliance is to be placed on what has been told in regard to even those two or three. The twenty-five degrees had been organized into a RITE before 1762. One by one they had been invented, worked, communicated by the inventor to others, and at last, how and by whom nobody knows, had been aggregated into a system called a RITE.” (*Masonic Origines, 8*).

In the absence of contemporary documents, all the early history of French Masonry is more or less apocryphal. But there is an apparent *consensus* of opinion among the most trustworthy authorities—whose speculations, in all probability, have some foundation in fact—that the RITE OF PERFECTION or HÉRÉDOM (otherwise HÉRÉDOM OF PERFECTION) sprang into existence contemporaneously with the EMPERORS OF THE EAST AND WEST, in 1758. This would make the system at least *eight* years younger than the Grand Lodge of the ROYAL ORDER OF SCOTLAND which existed at London in 1750; and *seventeen* if we accept the statement of the “ Grand Master ” of the latter, that he had held office since 1741. Moreover, if the actual “ records ” of 1750 are relied upon at all as a mirror of the past, we cannot limit the reception of evidence to the date of 1741, but must admit the natural presumption of a far higher antiquity for the ROYAL ORDER, that arises out of the existence (according to the testimony of the same documents) not only of Chapters established in 1743 and 1744, but of three others whose constitution was “ Immemorial ”—which, at the lowest estimate, and supposing the “ Grand Lodge ” to have been founded in 1741, would imply that there were then at work in London, three (or more) Chapters of the ORDER, some or one of which may have been contemporaneous with, or even older than, the “ SCOTS MASONS' LODGE,” in the English List for 1733.

From the letters K.L.W.N.N., which occur in the “ records ” of 1750, a connection has been presumed between the Speech of the CHEVALIER RAMSAY (1737), and the ROYAL

ORDER, but DR. CHETWODE CRAWLEY, by establishing the actual date at which *A Letter from the Grand Mistress of the Free-Masons*, saw the light, has shewn that a still earlier reference was made to the legendary grandeur of the old court of Operative Masonry in Ayrshire, in that singular pasquinade, which was printed at Dublin in 1731. The passage runs:—"The famous old *Scottish Lodge of Kilwinnin*, of which all the Kings in *Scotland* have been, from time to time, Grand Masters without Interruption, down from the days of *Fergus*, who reigned there more than 1000 Years ago, long before the Knights of *St. John of Jerusalem*, or the Knights of *Malta*."

It will be observed that "SCOTTS," or "SCOTCH" *Masons*; also "SCOTTS" and "ENGLISH" *Masters*, are mentioned in the Bath, Swalwell, and Salisbury minutes for 1746. These degrees, and the ROYAL ORDER, probably had a common origin, and among the former may have been early types of what are now so well known, the degrees of INSTALLED MASTER and the ROYAL ARCH.

The ENGLISH MASTERS, in the Swalwell Lodge, were required to make a payment of half-a-crown "for entering" the other (and presumably "SCOTS,") "*Mastership*." Was this succession of degrees referred to by DR. DASSIGNY in 1744? He speaks of "MASTER OF THE ROYAL ARCH," and of the association itself as "an organis'd body of men who have passed the Chair."

The earliest date at which the use of the word HÉRÉDOM in France, can be even fixed, is 1758, and therefore if the ROYAL ORDER OF SCOTLAND, at London, borrowed the term from the RITE OF PERFECTION, in Paris (as suggested in the German *Handbuch*) or *vice versa*, the only legitimate conclusion at which we can arrive is, that the *French RITE* was indebted to the *British* (or rather *English*) ORDER, for a portion of the title which it adopted at the same time prior to 1762.

The circumstance has, in my own judgment, been far too lightly passed over, that the earliest "records" of any degrees whatsoever, extraneous to the system of ancient Freemasonry, are those of the ROYAL ORDER, at London, of which parent stem the *Scottish Chapter*—now the Grand Lodge of the ORDER—was an offshoot between 1750 and 1754.

That there were casual references, however, to these "extraneous" (or "Scotts") degrees in the minute books of the Lodges, has been shewn, and they unite with the other evidence in making out a strong and imposing *prima facie* case with respect to the higher probability of these novelties having had their origin in England than in France.

"The sure traveller

Though he alight sometimes still goeth on."—G. HERBERT.

LORD BYRON was elected Grand Master in 1747, and by recent German writers, blindly following in the footsteps of DR. KLOSS, the wholly imaginary "alterations in the established forms" by the earliest of Grand Lodges, is associated with that year. KLOSS copied from the REV. JETHRO INWOOD (*Address to the Duke of Athol on the Subject of an Union*, 1804, p. 6), and the words of the latter I now transcribe:—"Until the year 1747, the antient landmarks of the Order were religiously and most strictly observed by every Lodge under the Constitution" [of the Grand Lodge].

In an appendix, INWOOD cites his "authorities," namely, the *Illustrations of Masonry*, and Lawrie's *History of Freemasonry* (1804), or in other words, WILLIAM PRESTON at first and second hand respectively. The last-named writer, indeed, was one of the greatest visionaries of his own or any other age, but for the assertion in regard to the year 1747 the *Rev Jethro Inwood* seems to have been solely responsible.

The statement was afterwards adopted, without inquiry, by the "father of Masonic Criticism," DR. KLOSS, and it affords a melancholy example of the manner in which the history of one of the most momentous epochs in the annals of English Masonry has been compiled. As we shall presently see, the true story of the progress and development of the Masonic Symbolism inherited by the Grand Lodge of England in 1717, can only be revealed by a removal of the successive incrustations of error, by which—in the ephemeral literature of the Craft—it has been overlaid.

This task I shall undertake when we reach the Third Group of Spurious Rituals, but must first of all proceed in an orderly sequence with the matters that have a prior claim to enter into the general narrative.

During the administration of LORD BYRON, Grand Master of the "*Regular*" Grand Lodge of England, a new or "schismatic" body, also assuming the title of a Grand Lodge, made its appearance at London, in 1751. That the brethren under the older and legitimate Grand Lodge were afterwards very generally described as the MODERNS, and their rivals under the younger and illegitimate Grand Lodge as the ANCIENTS, is common

knowledge. I therefore pass on to chronicle that the Irish *New Book of Constitutions* was published by Edward Spratt, Grand Secretary, "not in quality of an Author, . . . but only as a faithful Editor and Transcriber of the works of . . . James Anderson, D.D." at Dublin, also in 1751.

In 1755, "A Mason's Confession of the Oath, Word, and other Secrets of his Craft," was printed in the *Scots' Magazine* (xvii., 133). This is a most interesting "examination," but to avail of its actual bearing on the question of degrees a sort of retrospective second sight would be essential, and even if the possession of this faculty by any students of the Craft could be guaranteed, in the exercise of it no two of them would be likely to agree.

The next two years—1756 and 1757—witnessed the memorable letters of DR. THOMAS MANNINGHAM, Deputy Grand Master of the "Regular" Grand Lodge of England, to the governing body of Dutch Masonry at the Hague.

Shortly summarised, the leading utterances of DR. MANNINGHAM are as follow:—

- 1°. No higher degrees than the first three belong to Pure and Ancient Freemasonry.
- 2°. The secrets of the first three degrees were the same before the year 1717 as after it.
- 3°. The so-called High Degrees were introduced after 1740.

"The only Orders we know," observes the doctor, "are Three, Masters, Fellow-Crafts and Apprentices, and none of them ever arrive at the Honour of Knighthood by Masonry."

The two "Letters" were printed at length in a *Memoir* of DR. MANNINGHAM, written by me in 1892 (*A.Q.C.* v., 93-113), and very slightly abridged will be found in my last published work (*Conc. Hist.* 328-34). Of those readers, however, to whom the fifth volume of *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum* is accessible, I ask a passing glance at the commentaries of my own on DR. MANNINGHAM's survey of Masonic Symbolism, as existing in the 17th century, and handed down without any break of continuity to the Regular English Masons of 1757.

We are now aware that the prehistoric secrets of Masonry were communicated in two steps, and the manner of their gradual expansion into three I have in the earlier pages of the present paper endeavoured to explain. It is evident, however, that the falsification of Old Regulation XIII. by DR. ANDERSON in the *Constitutions* of 1738 was entirely unknown to the Deputy Grand Master of 1752-56.

That famous "Regulation" (O.R. XIII.) had, indeed, reached the third stage of its existence—the first occurring in 1723, when two degrees were mentioned but three were understood; the second in 1738, when the Grand Lodge, yielding to popular clamour, declared the two degrees of Ancient Masonry to have been really three; and the third in 1757, when an entirely new generation had sprung up, to whom the Symbolism which preceded the era of Grand Lodges was as remote and unintelligible as the customs of the STEINMETZEN are in our own. The "Letters" of DR. MANNINGHAM demand a careful perusal, and notably his remarks concerning the so-called "Scots Degrees" practised on the Continent. In the earlier of the two missives the writer says:—"Of late some fertile Genius's here, have attempted considerable Innovations, and their manner of working in Lodge they term sometimes Irish, another Scotch Masonry, why or wherefore they themselves best know." This, it is probable, points to the ritualistic observance of the Irish and Scottish brethren of that time, differing from those of the "Regular" English Masons, and being in agreement (as we learn by subsequent testimony) with the practices of the "Schismatics," or "Ancients."

Upon the story of the Great Schism in English Masonry it is not my present purpose to dilate. It will be convenient, however, to remark, that while three steps and no more were worked with the sanction of the Grand Lodge of 1717, additional degrees—those of INSTALLED MASTER and the ROYAL ARCH—together with a method of imparting the first two, the reverse of that obtaining under the older body, were characteristics of the authorised system of the Grand Lodge of 1751.

The ritualistic observances of the ANCIENTS prior to the election of LAURENCE DERMOTT as Grand Secretary in 1752, are unknown, but under the guiding hand of that remarkable man they acquired, if they did not previously possess, the tincture of his native soil. DERMOTT was an Irish Mason, and the following, which I extract from the minutes of the "Ancient" Grand Lodge, rather points to the labours of the Grand Secretary, in completing the Masonic education of the English seceders, having been not only arduous but protracted:—

March 13th, 1757.—“ The G^d Secretary call'd on a certain number of the Masters to attend the Grand Master's orders and work the Lodge, in the course of this business the G^d Secretary LAU DERMOTT traced and explained the 1st, 2^d and 3rd part of the Antient Craft and Settled many things (then disputed) to the entire satisfaction of all the brethren present, who faithfully promised to adhere strictly to the Antient System and to cultivate the same in their several lodges.”

The method of communicating the secrets of the Craft degrees, which was introduced or perfected by the Grand Secretary of the English Schismatics, came without doubt as a transfusion of Masonic customs from the land of his birth.

The date, however, at which the Irish “ manner of working in Lodge ” ceased to be an exact counterpart of the English system cannot be exactly, though it may be approximately, determined. The addition to CHARGE IV. in PENNELL'S *unauthorised* publication of 1730—referring to a *Third* degree—which taken by itself and without reference to the general context is misleading, enables us on a closer investigation and in conjunction with evidence of slightly later date, to attain a clearer view of the actual degrees sanctioned by the Grand Lodge of Ireland in the fourth decade of the eighteenth century, or, in other words, *during the closing years of the “ Epoch of Transition,”* than would have been possible if JOHN PENNELL had not failed to understand O.R. XIII. of the English *Constitutions* (1723) and recorded the error in his book.

The *removal* of the reference to a *Third* degree (CHARGE IV.), in the *authorised* Irish Regulations, printed in the *Pocket Companion* for 1735, is both curious and significant, and proves two things. The first, that PENNELL (like DR. FRANCIS DRAKE) read the words of JAMES ANDERSON in 1723 as importing *three* instead of *two* degrees; and the second, that the steps of Masonry known and practised under the Grand Lodge of Ireland in 1735, were two only in number. To the “ APPROBATION ” of the *Pocket Companion* (1735) are appended the names of the Grand Master, his Deputy, and the Grand Wardens of Ireland. The Grand Master, LORD KINGSLAND, was in his second year of office, and the Deputy, “ JAMES BRENNAN, M.D.,” had been S.G.W. in 1732-33, and was D.G.M. from 1734 to 1737. During the latter's tenure of office no changes were likely to occur in relation to the degrees, a probability which is increased by the circumstance that the Grand Secretary from 1732 to 1738 was JOHN PENNELL, who therefore must have assisted officially in dissipating the error to which he had *unofficially* given currency in 1730. JAMES, 4TH LORD KINGSTON, moreover, succeeded as Grand Master of Ireland in 1735, a position which he had already filled in 1731, and was destined to occupy for a third and fourth term in 1745 and 1746.

The Irish “ manner of working in Lodge ” must have been closely assimilated to that prevailing in England by LORD KINGSTON in 1731, nor can we believe that he passed out of the chair (in Dublin, at the conclusion of his second term of office) in 1736, without having aided in prolonging the happy community of tradition, which undoubtedly existed under the Grand Lodges of England and Ireland in 1735. That the English and the Irish work was virtually identical until after 1738, may, I think, be safely assumed, and it would be easy, from the succession of *Irish* “ Regulations ” (1741) and “ Constitutions ” (1751), modelled on English patterns, to multiply presumptions in favour of the “ manner of working in Lodge,” having continued to be as nearly as possible the same under the Grand Lodges of the sister jurisdictions until the middle of the eighteenth century.

But the period of time which elapsed *after* 1738, before the *Irish* ceased to be a counterpart (or one might almost say, an integral portion) of the *English* system of degrees, though of considerable interest in itself, lies outside the scope of our present inquiry. It has been my object to show that when the Grand Lodge of England formally sanctioned an expansion of the system of degrees, it struck out a path of its own with regard to this order in which the secrets of the first two should be imparted. “ *Masonry Dissected* ” the *Doyen* of Grand Lodges had vainly attempted to stamp out. But the vitality of PRICHARD'S Spurious Ritual, though lowered, was not extinguished. Owing to the careless use by ANDERSON of Scottish *Operative* terms in the *Constitutions* of 1723, there arose a popular delusion that *three* degrees or steps were known in *Speculative* Masonry. Proof of this is afforded by the manuscript records of the *Philosopica et Architectura Societas*, London (1725-27); the “ Speech ” of the Junior Grand Warden of York (1726); and the Irish “ *Constitutions* ” of JOHN PENNELL (1730). With every item of this evidence the reader has already become familiar, but they constitute the three chief links in the chain of proof, by the aid of which we are able to connect the action of the Grand Lodge in 1723 (exclusive of its influence on the Continent) with the series of events which, beginning with an additional degree, ended with a further and permanent enlargement of their number in 1813.

The fable attained its full growth concurrently with the publication of *Masonry Dissected*, in which Spurious Ritual the imaginary *three* degrees are not only described—in a manner that must have severely taxed his powers of invention—by SAMUEL PRICHARD, but the exact sequence in which they should be communicated is also laid down by that double-tongued deceiver.

With good reason and policy, the Grand Lodge of England, in 1738, when *for the first time* sanctioning an expansion and re-arrangement of the degrees, treated the pamphlet of the ritual-monger of 1730—to adopt the words of D.G.M. of that year—as “a foolish thing not to be regarded,” and we find that not even the progression of the three steps, or order in which they should be communicated, was the same in the *authorised* system as that enjoined in the *pseudo* Masonic Catechism of 1730.

At what dates the three degrees of the Craft were arranged in an orderly sequence, and officially recognized in other jurisdictions at home and abroad, cannot be positively stated. There was an extensive use of PRICHARD'S Catechism in Germany and France and without doubt it was considered by numerous Lodges and Brethren in the British Isles as depicting, with more or less fidelity, the unadulterated observances of the Craft.

The influence of the pamphlet in North Britain is veiled in much obscurity. The old Scottish MASON WORD is unknown. It has not yet been discovered, either what it was or to what extent it was in general use. Neither can it be determined whether at any given date prior to 1736, it was the same in Scotland as it was in England. Bro. WILLIAM OFFICER, of Edinburgh, a leading authority on the Masonry of his native land, observes: “I have read many Minute-Books of a date prior to 1736. The expression in them all is the WORD, or sometimes the MASONS' WORD. Singularly, in none of the Minute-Books is there the slightest reference to any change in the form of admission. *The change was made*, but it is dealt with as if the old system continued.”

It is probable—more cannot be affirmed—that while the tri-gradal system was being gradually introduced into Scotland, the method of communicating the different steps varied in different localities. Moreover, from about the time of entries relating to a second and third degree, appearing in the minutes of the Lodges, the Masonry of the northern kingdom was rent by a schism, which continued until 1809. Hence, if uniformity of working had been desired, there was no supreme governing body by which it could have been enforced. Whether the adherents of “MOTHER KILWINNING” were closer in touch with the “MODERNS” or the “ANCIENTS” (when those terms came into use) there is no evidence to disclose. But the other wing of the Scottish Craft, under the obedience of the Grand Lodge, seems in the first instance (as would appear from the MANNINGHAM Letters) to have worked the three Craft ceremonies in the same way as the Regular English Masons. Then came a coalition with the “ANCIENTS” or Schismatics, which, however, ultimately fell asunder, and we find the Grand Lodge of Scotland reunited in the strictest bonds of fraternity with the *Regular* Grand Lodge of England, in 1803. The “General Regulations” of 1741 show that DR. ANDERSON'S *new* way of describing the *old* degrees of Masonry was officially adopted by the Grand Lodge of Ireland in that year. *When*, however, the actual existence of three distinct steps was recognised by that body we cannot tell; nor can any definite judgment be formed with respect to the date at which the order of their progression was determined. All we know with certainty is, that in the second half of the eighteenth century the manner of working in the Irish and in the English Schismatic Lodges was identical. But what may have been entitled to rank as orthodoxy in one country was heterodoxy (or perhaps it would be more correct to say, apostacy) in the other.

In 1736, there were three Grand Lodges in the British Islands, and if we suppose the necessity for a choice to have arisen, it was equally open to them all to determine the order of priority of the first two degrees. What was actually done by the Grand Lodge of England has already been narrated. With respect to what happened in Scotland, I have thrown out a conjecture, and it only remains to be stated that the Grand Lodge of Ireland, instead of adopting the *authorised* English system of 1738, eventually bestowed its official sanction upon the progression of the degrees as given by SAMUEL PRICHARD in his Spurious Ritual of 1730.

That the Irish Grand Lodge had a clear right to decide for itself the sequence of the first and second degrees (*i.e.*, on the assumption that it was in the power of *any* person or body to alter the Masonic ceremonies) has been admitted. But that the Irish “manner of working in Lodge” could be legitimately transferred to this country, and arbitrarily imposed upon the English Masons, as certain writers appear to contend, is wholly unworthy of serious refutation. The Grand Lodge of England would have nothing

whatever to do either with SAMUEL PRICHARD or his delusive catechism, nor is it possible to conceive that the Regular English Masons were absolved from their natural allegiance because an official mantle had been thrown over that ritual-monger and perjured Freemason, by a Sister Grand Lodge.

The Schism in English Masonry soon assumed large dimensions, and a perfect deluge of Spurious Rituals was one of the results. *Masonry Dissected*, which was popularly supposed to contain the ceremonies practised by the ANCIENTS, seems to have had the most extensive sale down to about 1762, from which date *Jachin and Boaz*, a pamphlet associated in a like way with the MODERNS, succeeded to the "largest circulation." There were many others, and a full description of the distinctive features of every one of the Spurious Rituals forming what I have called the third group of these publications is among the *desiderata* of Masonic literature. But, to avoid prolixity, I must as far as possible refer to them in a collective form.

Of these so-called "Exposures" Bro. HUGHAN has well observed:—"They are so contradictory that it is quite impossible to found any argument on their text; they differ so much, even when published about the same time, and are necessarily so unreliable about the very points on which we desire light, that we, at all events, must dismiss them from examination. Still, accepting them as guides, what does their evidence amount to, and where do they lead us? They do not give any countenance to the theory that the "MODERNS" and "ANCIENTS" were so much at variance in their modes of working the three degrees" (*English Rite*, 60).

"The period from 1760 to 1775," observes the late ENOCH TERRY CARSON, in the annotated catalogue of his library, "was most prolific in 'Exposure literature,' as is shown by the following which appeared during that time. [1]. *The Three Distinct Knocks*, 1760; [2]. *Jachin and Boaz*, 1762; [3]. *Hiram, or the Grand Master Key*, 1764; [4]. *Shibboleth, or Every Man a Freemason*, 1765; [5]. *Solomon in all his Glory* [a translation from *Le Maçon Demasque*, Paris, N.D.), 1766; [6]. *M— B—, or the Grand Lodge Door Open'd*, [2nd edit.], 1766; [7]. *The Freemason Stripped Naked*, 1769. Most of these went through several editions. The above dates refer to the original editions, all of which will be found under appropriate heads in this Bibliography."

Bro. CARSON's *Masonic Bibliography* was not completed, but on a later page he mentions in connection with No. 6 above (No. 799 in his own collection), that the copy of A.D. 1766 in his possession, was the *second* and not the original edition. He also refers to another catechism or so-called "Exposure" [8]. *A Master Key to Freemasonry*, 1760, which may have been acquired after his description of the previous *seven* had been printed. Further criticising No. 6 above, the great Masonic Bibliographer says,—"It contains the form observed at the Instalment of a Master . . . with the 'Oath' and the little ceremony then used, and since known as the Past Master's degree. I believe this is the earliest printed book in which we have any account of the ceremony of this so-called degree."

The date, however, of the *first* edition of this pamphlet (No. 6) has not been ascertained. But the ceremony of installing the Master of a Lodge is described in Nos. 1 and 2, printed respectively in 1760 and 1762.

Nos. 2, 3, 4 and 6, profess to reveal the secrets of Masonry both "ANCIENT" and "MODERN," and in No. 8 we are informed that—"The ceremony of the installation of an Apprentice into the order of Fellow Crafts is always performed in a Grand Lodge."

In several of the catechisms the difference in working between the Masons under the rival Grand Lodges of England forms the subject of explanation and remark. For example, in No. 1 we are told by the pamphleteer—"There is a Book already published called *Masonry Dissected*, which was published in the year 1730; and I believe was all the Masonry that was made use of at that time" (p. 7). But the fullest, as well as the most ridiculous, of all the stories that were coined at the time is to be found in No. 6, where it is related that after the appearance of PRICHARD's work—"In order to prevent being imposed upon by cowans or imposters, who might want to gain admittance from his Performance, the Fraternity held a General Council, and the Entered Apprentice's and Fellow Craft's words were revers'd, and private Accounts transmitted to each Lodge, though there are some unconstituted Lodges [which] still retain the former custom" (p. 38.)

Leaving for a moment the Spurious Rituals of the Third Group, let me next introduce to the reader two Masonic authors of repute, after which the reason why their names and those of certain pretended revelations of Craft Secrets have been placed in juxtaposition will be related.

Proceeding in order of time, the first to be mentioned is LAURENCE DERMOTT, Grand Secretary and afterwards the Deputy Grand Master of the body of Masons who seceded from the Grand Lodge of England, and falsely assuming the title of "Ancient York Masons," stigmatized the *Regular* Masons as "Moderns." He was also the author of the *Ahiman Rezon* (or *Book of Constitutions*) of the Seceders, of which four editions appeared during his lifetime, and an equal number between 1800 and 1813.

WILLIAM PRESTON was for a time Deputy Grand Secretary of the *Regular* Grand Lodge of England, but is best known as author of the famous *Illustrations of Masonry*, of which twelve editions were published during his lifetime and several after his decease.

The two men were the literary champions of their respective Grand Lodges, and upon the qualifications each one of them possessed for the task he had undertaken, as well as upon the manner in which (in either instance) it was carried out, I have commented at length not only in my original *History of Freemasonry*, but also in the columns of these *Transactions* (vi. 44-51), and most recently of all, in my "*Concise History*" (chap. vii.).

I shall endeavour, therefore, to place in a small compass, the remarks with which I am now about to proceed, as all the publications last referred to are easily accessible, and the general fidelity of my present observations can be readily tested by collating them with the authorities cited in support of the contentions of earlier dates.

The "ANCIENTS," in the history of degrees, accepted the statements of DERMOTT, and the "MODERNS" those of PRESTON. Both men welcomed any *fictions*, which they transmuted into *facts*, that might serve to sustain their arguments, and each of them in turn laid himself at the mercy of his opponent, by polemical indexterity. But as

"A blot is not a blot unless it be hit."

So, while PRESTON'S slip respecting the "dropped forms" served as a never-failing text for the denunciations of the Seceders, DERMOTT'S more serious blunders and misstatements have not, up to the present day, been fully refuted.

According to PRESTON, the older Grand Lodges of England unwisely sanctioned "an alteration in the established forms," and a legend grew up, for which the same writer was responsible, that the rivalry of "ANCIENTS" and "MODERNS," or, in other words, the great Schism in English Masonry, originated about 1739—a delusion which was stamped with the hall-mark of its approval by the Regular Grand Lodge of England in a long footnote appended to the occurrences of that year, which appears in the *Constitutions* of 1784 (pp. 239-41).

It has been noticed by a few writers that WILLIAM PRESTON, though undoubtedly regarded in his lifetime as the oracle of his Grand Lodge, exhibited with regard to the early history of that body, in the columns of his *Illustrations*, a strange ignorance or perversity. He tells us that private Lodges, exclusive of the original Four, were prohibited from imparting aught but the secrets of the first degree for a much longer period than we know to have been the case.

How PRESTON could have fallen into this error has been the subject of vague conjecture, but his early contributions to the literature of the Craft show him to have been profoundly ignorant of Masonic history, and in two instances [at least] the source of his inspiration is to be found in the Catechisms, or Spurious Rituals, which sprang up with a rare luxuriance, after DERMOTT had published the first edition of *Ahiman Rezon* (1756), and before PRESTON had brought out a second edition of the *Illustrations of Masonry* (1775). The latter's allusion to the "dropped forms" I have dealt with at length in my *History of Freemasonry* (ii., 397, 424), and *The Grand Lodge of the Schismatics or Ancients* (A.Q.C. vi., 47).

Several of the Spurious Rituals refer to the sequence of the degrees as given by SAMUEL PRICHARD, being the *original* method in which they were communicated, but the only one of the series (within my own knowledge) that professes to reveal the manner in which the alteration was effected, is the catechism numbered 799 in the collection of the late Bro. CARSON and 6 in the present paper. From this source PRESTON evidently derived the legendary materials out of which he erected his "castle in the air." "Alterations in the established forms" were certainly made, or at least sanctioned, by the *Regular* Grand Lodge in 1738, and whatever discontent may have arisen in consequence must have been at its height in 1739. But what those "alterations" really were has already been explained, and there is no *contemporary* evidence of any kind, from which the existence of a schism in English Masonry is to be inferred, until we reach the year 1751, when the minutes of the body calling itself the "Grand Lodge of England, according to the Old Institutions" (or ANCIENTS) commence.

It should be recollected, however, that when PRESTON first attained eminence as a writer of the Craft (1775), the early history of the degrees of Pure and Ancient Masonry had long been forgotten. *Three* degrees were then supposed to have existed for all time, and therefore—leaving *probability* out of the question—there was nothing *impossible* in the theory, that as a measure of precaution, in or shortly after 1730, a variation occurred with regard to the manner of imparting the first two . . . We know *now* that such a feat *was impossible*, as the Masonry of the Grand Lodge consisted of the “Apprentice” and the “Master’s Parts” only, the former of which (afterwards the first and second degrees) was at that time undivided.

As further tending to prove that the so-called “Exposures” of Masonic Secrets were repositories which furnished PRESTON with materials for the construction of his “history,” the pamphlet No. 8, *A Master Key to Freemasonry*, may be cited, as containing the statement that (long after the repeal of “Old Regulation” XIII., in 1725) Apprentices could only be advanced to a higher degree in the Grand Lodge. Of the credulity of LAURENCE DERMOTT, and his readiness to believe—or at least record—anything that might tend to extol his own or to disparage the other Society, many examples might be given, but two must suffice, as the writings of the author of *Ahiman Rezon* only concern us indirectly in the present inquiry, though a word or two will not be out of place in glancing at the historical methods of the Irish Mason whose “method of working in Lodge” was substituted for that of the older English system at the Union in 1813.

The first example of DERMOTT’s inaccuracy (or worse) is afforded by his describing the English Schismatics as “Antient York Masons”—a wholly undeserved title, of which the mischievous effect on Masonry abroad has not yet spent its force. The second I take from his *Ahiman Rezon* (3rd edition) of 1778, where he tells us, on the authority of “Thomas Grinsell, a man of great veracity, that eight persons whose names were DESAGULIERS, GOFTON, KING, CALVERT, LUMLEY, MADDEN, DE NOYER, and VRADEN, were the Geniusses to whom the world is indebted for the memorable invention of Modern Masonry.”

As a matter of fact, at an Occasional Lodge, held at Kew, on November 5th, 1737, the eight persons named by DERMOTT as the Founders of the Grand Lodge (and no others) were present, and took part in the initiation of FREDERICK, PRINCE OF WALES. (*Constit.* 1738, p. 137.)

The champion of the “Ancients,” who may be termed the founder of the present system of English Masonry practised under the aegis of the Grand Lodge, did not live to witness the union of the two Societies in 1813. The protagonist on the side of the “Moderns,” however—WILLIAM PRESTON—lived for several years after that great event, and the articles agreed upon at the healing of the Great Schism bear the impress of his own incapacity as an historian, quite as plainly as they attest the greater force of character and higher polemical dexterity of LAURENCE DERMOTT.

The “Articles of Union” will form the next and concluding step of the present narrative, but some details have yet to be filled in, which, though lying slightly outside the boundary of the Masonry which preceded the era of Grand Lodges, are situated in the immediate borderland, and by many respectable authorities are even supposed to be encircled by the land-marks of the Craft.

First of all, there is the ROYAL ARCH. This degree as practised or referred to by IRISH or “ANCIENT” Masons, we hear of as existing in 1740 (*circa*), 1743 and 1744. LAURENCE DERMOTT became a Royal Arch Mason at Dublin in 1746. The degree is noticed in the Minutes of the “ANCIENT” or Schismatic Grand Lodge of England, in 1752, and “the Masters of the Royal Arch” were “summon’d to meet in order to regulate things relative to that most valluable branch of the Craft,” in 1757. But the degree does not appear to have been definitely adjudged to be an integral part of their Masonic System by the “ANCIENTS,” until 1771. Later in the same year, December 4th, the Deputy Grand Master (LAURENCE DERMOTT), at a meeting of the Grand Lodge, “expatiated on the scandalous method pursued by most of the Lodges (on St. John’s Days) in passing a number of Brethren through the Chair, on purpose to obtain the sacred Mystry’s of the ROYAL ARCH.” Ultimately, it was resolved—“That no person for the future shall be made a ROYAL ARCH MASON but the legal Representatives of the Lodge, except a Brother (that is going abroad) who hath been twelve months a Registered Mason; and must have the Unanimous Voice of his Lodge to receive such Qualification.” A Grand Chapter (herein following the example set by the Regular English Masons) was established by the Ancients, of which the first mention in the records occurs in 1771. Among the Brethren

under the older Grand Lodge of England, who were early members of the degree, was THOMAS DUNCKERLEY, who received it at Portsmouth in 1754. The ROYAL ARCH was also worked in Lodges on the Regular establishment, at Bristol in 1758, and at Yarmouth in 1763.

A little later a Grand Chapter—unrecognized by the Grand Lodge, but of which Grand Officers of the "Moderns" were the leading spirits—was established. Its earlier records have perished, but there are existing minutes dating from 1765.

Still older records are contained in a volume which has only recently been restored to the light of day. It is entitled—"Minute Book belonging to the Most Sublime Degree or Order of ROYAL ARCH appertaining to the Grand Lodge of ALL ENGLAND, held at the City of York, 1762." Five degrees, viz., the three of the CRAFT, the ROYAL ARCH, and KNIGHT TEMPLAR, were worked with the sanction of the Grand Lodge of York in 1780.

It has been stated, on the authority of alleged transcripts of missing documents, made many years after the dates which they are supposed to record, that the degree was both known and worked at Stirling in 1743. But we shall at least be safe in assuming that it must have become naturalized in SCOTLAND about the middle of the eighteenth century, as a Lodge bearing the name of "ROYAL ARCH" was chartered at Glasgow in 1755.

In AMERICA, three brethren were "Raised to the Degree of ROYAL ARCH Mason," at Fredericksburg, Virginia, in 1753. There was a Lodge, bearing the name of "ROYAL ARCH," at Philadelphia, and the attendance of three members of the degree is recorded in 1767.

In ST. ANDREW'S Chapter, Boston, a brother was accepted and "made by receiving the four steps, that of an EXCELLT., SUP.-EXCELLT., ROYAL ARCH and K^T TEMPLAR"—afterwards called "the four Degrees of a ROYAL ARCH Mason"—in 1769.

There is no earlier entry in any written (or printed) book which records the actual communication of the degree of KNIGHT TEMPLAR.

In the Minute-book of the CHAPTER OF FRIENDSHIP, constituted by the Grand Chapter of the "Regular" Masons at London, which has been already noticed under the year 1765, the first entry (translated from the original cipher), reads:—"At a ROYAL ARCH Chapter held at the George Tavern in Portsmouth on First Sept'. Seventeen hundred and sixty-nine . . . The Pro. G.M. THOMAS DUNCKERLEY bro't the Warrant of the Chapter, and having lately rec'd the 'Mark,' he made the bre'n 'MARK MASONS' and 'MARK MASTERS,' and each chose their 'MARK'." This is the earliest known reference to MARK Masonry which exists.

The following are taken from the same Minute-book:—

November 2nd, 1770.—"Bro. DONALDSON told us how to make EXCELLENT and SUPER EXCELLENT Masons."

July 21st, 1771.—Three brothers "were made MARK MASONS and MARK MASTERS, also R. A. MASONS and EXCELLENT and SUPER EXCELLENT Masons."

October 21st, 1778.—"Com. PALMER Z. read a letter from Com. DUNCKERLEY, that we might make KNIGHT TEMPLARS if we wanted and it was resolved to . . . Bro. JOHN DANCE took the MARK and choose []. Also EDMUND COOPER, His Mark [] and to be made ARCH next time. Bro. DANCE declin'd the ARCH."

"In the above Minute," says the historian of the Chapter, (Bro. ALEXANDER HOWELL) "there are two things worthy of notice. We have a brother taking the MARK Degree alone, and declining to be made a ROYAL ARCH MASON, and we have a reference to KNIGHT TEMPLARS—earlier than any known mention of them in England."

Returning to the third group of Spurious Rituals, if there are earlier allusions to the degree of "INSTALLED" (or "PAST") Master, than those which appear in the catechisms numbered by me 1, 2, and 6 respectively, I am unaware of their existence. That it was neither known nor practised in England during the early stages of the Grand Lodge era I have endeavoured to show in a paper of some length which appeared in an earlier volume of our *Transactions* (v. 94), and to this the curious reader is referred.

In the opinion of Dr. KLOSS, which is entitled to our respect, and from whose conclusions on all points of Masonic history it is essential to differ with humility, the word and grip of the "INSTALLED MASTERS" degree, a ceremony which he finds referred to for the first time in *The Three Distinct Knocks*, 1760 (No. 1 above), are identical with a "SCOTS" Grade on the Continent. The same writer observes that both in France and England the Ritual mongers and peddlers of Masonic novelties, hoodwinked their compatriots by ascribing a foreign origin to the so-styled "High Degrees."

The doctor further remarks, that while the " ANCIENTS " taunted the " MODERNS " with having introduced innovations, the tables might have been turned upon them, by citing their own *adoption* of the ROYAL ARCH and PAST MASTER'S degrees.

Long ago, in the *Masonic Monthly* of July 1882, my own view with regard to the relationship between the two " additional " or " SCOTS " degrees (R.A. and P.M.) was thus expressed :

.. " The supposition has much to recommend it, that the communication of the secrets of the ROYAL ARCH, was the earliest form in which any esoteric teaching was specially linked with the incident of Lodge Mastership, or, in other words, that the *degree* of the ROYAL ARCH was the complement of the Master's *grade*. Out of this was ultimately evolved the degree of INSTALLED MASTER, a ceremony unknown in the ' MODERN ' system until the first decade of the nineteenth century, and of which I can trace no sign amongst the ' ANCIENTS ' until the growing practice of conferring the ARCH upon brethren not legally qualified to receive it, brought about a *constructive* passing through the Chair, which by qualifying candidates not otherwise eligible, naturally entailed the introduction of a ceremony, *additional* to the simple forms known to PAYNE, ANDERSON, and DESAGULIERS."

During the last quarter of the eighteenth century there was a further increase in the number, not only of alleged revelations of Masonic Secrets, but also in that of newly fashioned or extraneous degrees. These, however, without exception, I must pass over in silence, as not being material to the inquiry we are now upon.

The Great Schism in English Masonry was brought to a close, as all are aware, by a fusion of the ANCIENTS and MODERNS in 1813. The ROYAL ARCH and PAST MASTER'S degrees were recognised by the UNITED GRAND LODGE, and the *Irish*—or to be correct, the earlier and *unauthorized English*—sequence of the first and second steps of Masonry, prevailed over the rival system which had been *originally* ordained by the *Regular* (and only legitimate) GRAND LODGE OF ENGLAND, in the re-arrangement of the degrees, at the close of the " Epoch of Transition " in 1738.

According to the Second Article of the Union :

" It is declared and pronounced that pure Ancient Masonry consists of three degrees, and no more, *viz.*, those of the Entered Apprentice, the Fellow Craft, and the Master Mason (including the Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch). But this Article is not intended to prevent any Lodge or Chapter from holding a meeting in any of the degrees of the Orders of Chivalry, according to the Constitutions of the said Orders."

How, indeed, any " Order " or ceremony, *which did not exist* in the era preceding that of Grand Lodges, could be constituted a portion of " pure Ancient Masonry," it would be idle to inquire, though the remark may be expressed, that if one Grand Lodge could add to the system of *Ancient* Masonry, so could another—but this opens up a vast subject which can only be satisfactorily examined in a paper on " The LANDMARKS (or NATURAL BOUNDARIES) of Free Masonry."

It may be observed, in conclusion, that the expression " HIGH DEGREES " which is used to describe the novelties which from time to time have been engrafted on the Craft system, is both inaccurate and misleading, and in taking leave of the reader an anecdote occurs to my mind which seems to be so much in point that I shall proceed to relate it.

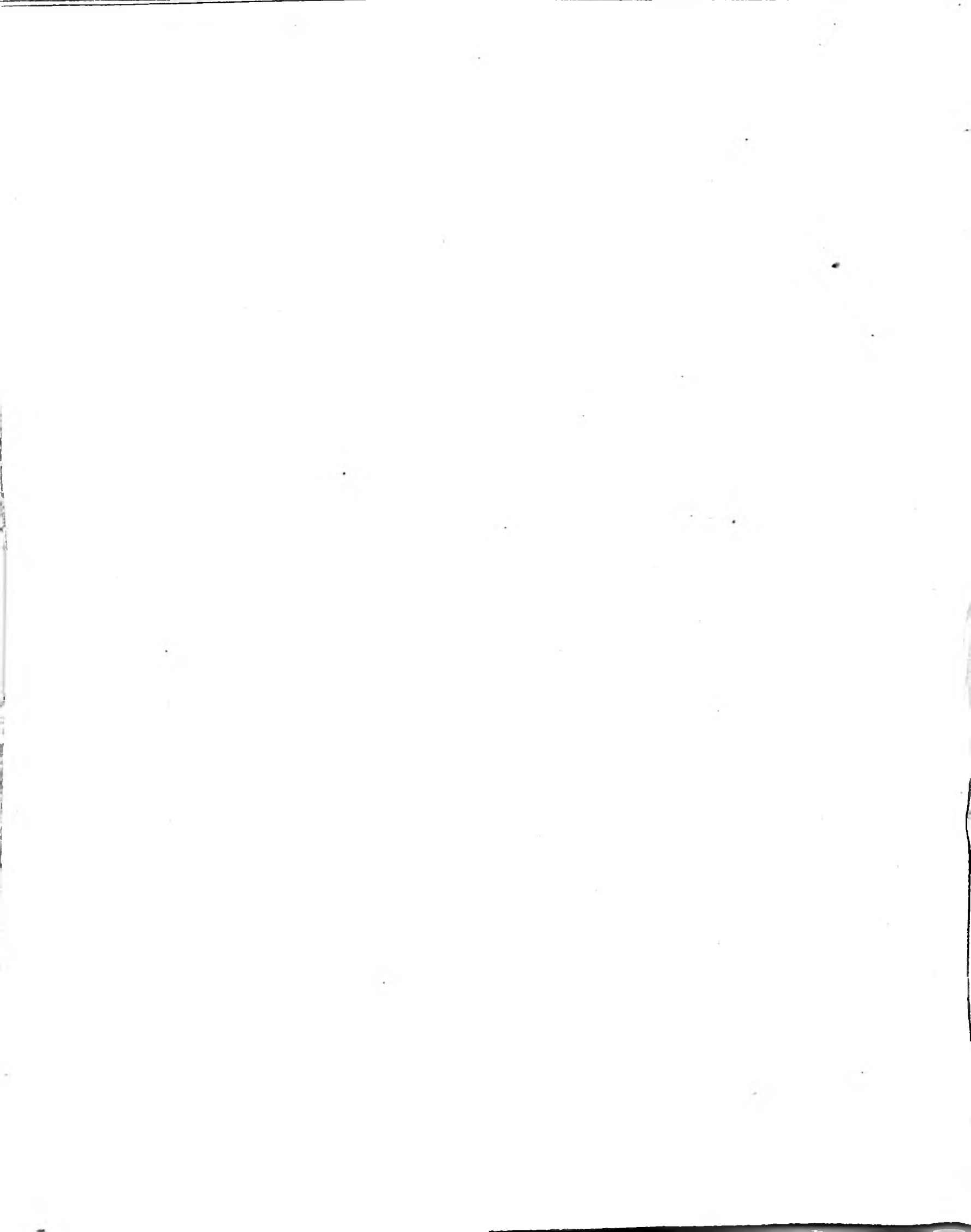
Some members of the QUATUOR CORONATI " CIRCLE " may have seen, and all will have read of, the guest chambers in many an ancient castle, where, as a common feature, will be found a bed surmounted by a great dusty canopy, which as often as not is domed and adorned with plumes. Such a canopy as this, it was, that the Highland laird mistook for the bed itself, and mounted at the top of, while he put his servant in the sheets, thinking that the loftier stratum was the place of grandeur.

For my own part, I am quite content to lie in the bed of Ancient Craft Masonry, and to let those that like climb into the canopy.

XIII.

PHILO-MUSICÆ ET ARCHITECTURÆ
SOCIETAS APOLLINI.

[Ars Quatuor Coronatorum, 1903.]



PHILO-MUSICÆ ET ARCHITECTURÆ SOCIETAS APOLLINI.*

[A. Q. C., 1903.]

The Society, of which the above is the full title, was founded at the beginning of 1725, and after a short and troubled career passed out of existence almost imperceptibly in 1727. But there are minutes still existing, recorded during its brief span of life, and these, forming the ninth volume of our Archæological Library, which have been not only carefully edited but also most suggestively annotated by the present Secretary of the Lodge, will be examined with some particularity in this review. Before, however, proceeding with my task, let me mention for the information of those who are not "constant readers" of our *Transactions*, that the volume has already been the subject of notice in these columns (*A.Q.C.*, xiv., 134), though I may add that the points to which my own observations will be chiefly directed, lie outside the boundary within which the remarks of Bro. W. J. HUGHAN, the reviewer on such earlier occasion, were confined.

The Manuscript was presented in 1859 by JOHN HENDERSON—S.G.D. 1833, Grand Registrar 1837—to the British Museum, where it is catalogued as "Additional MS. No. 23,202."

The first page of writing is occupied with an illuminated title, containing the armorial bearings of the Founders. The place of honour is given to the first *Præses*, or President, WILLIAM GULSTON, and the next rank to the Dictator and Director of all Musical Performances, FRANCESCO XAUERIO GEMINIANI. The original title was painted by NORTH STAINER—Grand Steward, 1725—who received £2 12s. 6d. for the work on the 17th of September, 1725. The ornamental writing of the Fundamental Constitution and Orders was executed by either JOHN or CONINGSBY MOORE; the sum of £5 5s. being paid to the latter on the 14th of October, 1725.

The minutes commence February 18th, 1725, and continue to March 23rd, 1727.

The Manuscript, so far as Bro. RYLANDS has been able to discover, is the only remaining example of minutes kept by any of the Musical Societies of the eighteenth century.

The Society was founded "to fix and establish a Mutual Society of True Lovers of Music and Architecture," and the services were secured as Musical Director of one "who was esteemed the greatest violinist of his time, and a composer of great excellence."

The rules provide (*inter alia*):—

- i.—That a President shall be chosen every three months.
- ii.—"That such *President* or *Master* shall have power to appoint two *Censors* or his Senior and Junior *Wardens*, for the time being."
- viii.—That if any Person or Persons shall talk RELIGION or POLITICKS or controvert any part or points of them shall be Expelled the SOCIETY without any Appeal."
- xviii.—"That no Person be admitted as a Visitor unless he be a FREE MASON."

There is nothing laid down in the Regulations with regard to any qualification for membership, but if the elected candidate—on each occasion after the foundation of the Society—was not already a Mason, he was made one as a preliminary to his formal reception.

From first to last there were thirty nine members in all, of whom eighteen were "made Masons" by the Society. During the same period about forty-seven visiting "Brethren" were present at the meetings.

* *The Book of the Fundamental Constitution and Orders of the Philo Musicæ et Architecturæ Societas, London, 1725-1721; with Introduction and Notes by W. Harry Rylands, F.S.A. (vol. ix., Quat. Cor. Reprints, price 10/6.)*

The founders were all members of the Lodge at the QUEEN'S HEAD in Hollis Street, which ceased to exist, at least as a "Regular Lodge," probably owing to the "Irregular Makings" conducted in its musical adjunct, at some time after 1725, and presumably about 1726-27.

The Manuscript throws a strong sidelight on the early customs of the English Freemasons, at a period coinciding with a remarkable era in the history of the earliest of Grand Lodges. The entries, however, which chiefly concern us in the present article, are those which tend to illuminate the vexed question of degrees, and these are mainly selected with a view to placing the reader in possession of such necessary information as may enable him to form an independent judgment with respect to the weight of the evidence upon which, as indicating the number of Masonic "steps" known and practised in 1725, I shall presently rely.

In what may be termed the *Prolegomena* of the Founders, the following account, hereinafter referred to as forming a portion of "The Fundamental Constitution and Orders," is given of the formation of the Society:—

"On The Eighteenth Day of February [1725] This Society was founded and Begun at the QUEEN'S HEAD near Temple Barr. By us the Eight Underwritten Seven of which did Belong to the Lodge at the QUEEN'S HEAD in Hollis Street, And were made Masons There, In a Just and Perfect Lodge. Vizt M^r WILL^m GULSTON Merchant and M^r EDMUND SQUIRE Gent. were made Masons The 15th of December 1724 By M^r THOMAS BRADBURY Master of the Said Lodge COORT KNEVIT ESQ^r and M^r WILLIAM JONES Gent. were made Masons the 22^d of December 1724 By His Grace The DUKE OF RICHMOND Grand Master, Who then Constituted the Lodge, Immediately after which CHARLES COTTON, ESQ^r was made a Mason by the said Grand Master M^r PAPILLON BALL Merch^t and SEIGN^r FRANCESCO XAUERIO GEMINIANI were made Masons the 1st of February 1724 [1724-25] M^r THOMAS MARSHALL Gent. was made a Mason at THE GEORGE in Long Acre Sometime before the said M^r WILLIAM GULSTON COORT KNEVIT ESQ^r M^r WILLIAM JONES and M^r EDMUND SQUIRE were Regularly Pass'd Masters in the before mentioned Lodge of Hollis Street And before We Founded This Society A Lodge was held Consisting of Masters Sufficient for that Purpose in Order to Pass CHARLES COTTON, ESQ^r M^r PAPILLON BALL and M^r THOMAS MARSHALL Fellow Crafts In the Performance of which M^r WILLIAM GULSTON Acted as Senior Warden Immediately after which Vizt the 18th Day of February A.D. 1724 [1724-25] the Officers of the Society were chosen and the Fundamental Constitution and Orders approved." The signatures then follow of "WILLIAM GULSTON, COORT KNEVIT, W^m JONES, EDMUND SQUIRE, CHAS. COTTON, E. PAPILLON BALL, THO^s MARSHALL," and "FRAN^{co} X^o GEMINIANI."

The first applicant for membership after the formation of the Society, was THOMAS SHUTTLEWORTH who, on February 18th, 1725, was "Then made and admitted according to the Fundamental Constitution and Orders." The eight founders were present and their names are recorded. Two Serving Brethren were subsequently "made and admitted" at the same meeting, in the presence of the *nine* full members. THOMAS HARBIN, a "Master Mason, belonging to the ROSE AND CROWN LODGE, in Westminster," together with another "Brother" whose Lodge cannot be identified, joined the Society on April 1st. There was also present, "From the Lodge at the QUEEN'S HEAD in Hollis Street, as Visitor" "THO. FFISHER, a Master"

Mr. JAMES MURRAY was "made and admitted," and Brother ANTHONY CORVILLE, "a member and a Master Mason" of the Lodge at the QUEEN'S HEAD aforesaid, was "admitted" on April 15th, in the presence of SHUTTLEWORTH, HARBIN, and the eight founders of the Society.

A petition for membership from JOSHUA DRAPER is recorded under April 29th, and on the same date it was

"Resolved

. That this Right Worshipfull and highly Esteemed Societie do meet on Wednesday y^e 12th of May next att 5 a Clock in ye Afternoon on business of Importance"

The eight founders, together with SHUTTLEWORTH, HARBIN, and CORVILLE were present at this meeting. Then follows a blank page (76), on which it is more than probable something was intended to be recorded that would have been explanatory of the next entries in the book:—

“The 12th day of May, 1725—Our Beloved Brothers & Directors of this Right Worshipfull Societye whose Names are here Underwritten (viz.)

Brother Charles Cotton Esq^c

Broth^r Papillon Ball

Were regularly passed Masters

Brother F X^o Geminiani

Was regularly passed fellow Craft and Master

Brother James Murray

Was regularly passed Fellow Craft

Wittness

William Gulston *Praeses*

Coort Knevit }
William Jones } *Censores*”

The proceedings on the above date will hereinafter be more particularly referred to, but it may be conveniently stated at this point, firstly, that as *all* the entries occurring under May 12th, 1725, are given above, we are left in doubt as to who were present, besides GULSTON, KNEVIT, JONES, and the recipients of degrees; and secondly *the records are silent with respect to any Masonic ceremony having been worked at other meetings of the Society, except that of “making” (or Initiation).*

On the following day—May 13th—JOSHUA DRAPER “Was Made and Admitted, there being present, W. GULSTON, *Praeses*, C. KNEVIT and W. JONES, *Censores*, CHARLES COTTON, E. PAPILLON BALL, T. MARSHALL, T. SHUTTLEWORTH, T. HARBIN, JAMES MURRAY, and ANTHONY CORVILLE.”

The Junior Warden of “the Lodge att TOM’S COFFEE HOUSE in Clare Market, attended this meeting as a visitor.”

A week later—June 20th—there was a meeting of the Grand Lodge, when it was “Ordered That that there be a Lre [letter] wrote to the foll [owing] Brethren to desire them to attend the next Quarterly Communication (Vizt) WILLIAM GULSTON, COORT KNEVITT, WILLIAM JONES, CHARLES COTTON, THOMAS FISHER, THOMAS HARBIN, and FRANCIS XAVIERO GEMINIANI.”

“The seven Masons summoned to appear at the Grand Lodge,” says BRO. RYLANDS, “were all members of the QUEEN’S HEAD in Hollis Street in 1725,” and he is of opinion that the “Order” requiring their attendance—of which no notice whatever appears to have been taken—was issued to them “as members of a *Regular* Lodge, over whom the Grand Lodge would certainly have control.”

A THOMAS FISHER *afterwards* became a member of the Musical Society, and was duly “made a Free Mason” and “admitted” in September, 1725. But the earlier THOMAS FISHER was never anything more than a *visitor*, and his name was probably reported to the Grand Lodge in error for that of EDMUND SQUIRE, or PAPILLON BALL, each of whom was a Founder of the Society as well as a member of the Lodge at QUEENS’ HEAD in Hollis Street.

Returning to the records of the lesser association, there were present as visitors, on July 22nd, JOHN REVIS (Grand Secretary, 1734-57, and afterwards Deputy Grand Master), and “From the Lodge att the Fountain in the Strand.”

“JOHN HOOKE, A Master
JOHN CHETTLE, a Master.”

On the same date it was “Resolved”

“That a Frontispiece be painted consisting of the Arms or Cypher of each of y^e first Thirteen [members] and a blank sheild left to be fill’d up.”

In the following month

“Die Jovis 5^o Aug^o 1725.

Resolved

Upon the reading of M. JOHN ELLAM’S petition That He be made a Free Mason in Order to be admitted a Member of this Worshipfull and Highly Esteem’d Society.

Ordered.

That He attends directly this Society.

Accordingly.

Eodem Die M^r JOHN ELLAM did attend and was made a Mason."

The *Præses*, *Censors*, and seven other members were present on this occasion.

On September 2nd, there were present "as Visitors,"

"GEO. PAYNE J : G : Warden

JA : LATOUCHE Master of the RED LION Tottenh : Warden, Sen^r of the Fr. Lodge.

EDWARD DOWSALL a Master."

The expression "a Master" occurs in no entry of later date.

It was resolved—September 16th—that Brother NORTH STAINER be paid £2 12s. 6d. for painting the "Frontispiece" ordered on July 22nd, and his receipt for that amount, dated September 17th, 1725, is duly entered in the minutes.

Another receipt—of £1 7s., from the Society, for "the Book of Constitutions of Freemasons & others,"—is given under September 30th.

On October 14th, it was "Ordered,"

"That M^r JOHN MOORE, be paid Five Guineas for his care in writing and Engrossing the Fundamental Constitution & Orders of this Right Worshipfull . . . Society."

A fortnight later—October 20th—there occurs,

"Whereas This R^t Worshipfull . . . Society as in the Fundamentall Constitution and Orders is recorded to have been Founded and Begun at the QUEEN'S HEAD near Temple Barr," etc.

As will presently appear, the *date* at which the "Fundamental Constitution and Orders,"—including the account of the Foundation of the Society—were compiled, has a material bearing on the general question of Masonic Degrees.

A minute of December 16th, 1725, records:—

"A Letter Dat. the 8th Instant from Brother GEO : PAYNE Jun^r Grand Warden directed in form to this Society inclosing a Letter from the DUKE OF RICHMOND Grand Master dat. likewise the 8 Instant directed to the Presid^t and the rest of the Brethren at the APOLLO in which he Erroneously insists on and Assumes to himself a Pretended Authority to call Our R^t Worpsfull and Highly Esteem'd Society to an account for making Masons irregularly for which reasons as well as for want of a Due Regard Just Esteem and Omitting to Address himself in proper form to this R^t Worpsfull and Highly Esteem'd Society

Ordered

That the Said Letters do lyc on the Table."

On the same day (Dec. 16th)

"The Petitions of Mr. WM. WHARAM MR. JAMES BROTHERTON and MR. JOHN COCK (the latter having been one of the founders of the late Society Entitled Philo-Musiceæ Societas) . . . being Read . . . They . . . did attend and were made Masons."

Three members of "the Lodge at the HORN at Westminster"—ALEXANDER HARDINE, the Master; FRANCIS SORRELL, Senior Grand Warden; and CHARLES DELAFAYE—were present "as Visitors" on December 23rd.

In the following year—January 19th, 1726—it was Resolved,—“That a Register be Ellected” by whom “the minutes of all the Resolutions and Orders . . . Shall be . . . Registered in a ffair Legible Hand . . . in the Book of Records which Said Entry's shall not long' [be] omitted or Postpon'd than the termination of each Presidentship.”

On March 26th, it was Resolved,

"That EDWARD BEDFORD and THOMAS FISHER unworthy Members of this Society as likewise James Brotherton and Thomas REED who were made Masons in order to be admitted Members hereof be from this day for their Scandalous and Unbrotherly Actions Expelled."

"May 26th, "Ordered,"—"That Mr. CONINGBY MOORE be paid one guinea for endorsing several Musick Papers and entring fair the Orders of this Society till the 30th of December last past."

"June 23rd.—"JOSEPH MURDEN Esq^r did attend and was made a Mason." This was the last Initiate, all the subsequent members being "Brothers" prior to their election.

July 21st.—The purchase of "The Masons old Constitutions," presumably the tract published by J. ROBERTS in 1722, was reported to the Society.

September 15th.—Two further members, for “Scandalous and unbrotherly Actions, were expelled . . . with the utmost contempt.” A similar Resolution also affecting two members is recorded under December 15th. A fifth expulsion occurred on December 22nd.

In 1727, “four Brothers were elected by Ballot” on February 16th, and the minutes end abruptly on March 23rd. There is nothing, however, in the closing entries which betokens an early dissolution of the Society, and it probably existed for some time longer, though the proceedings were not fair copied into the book.

The many features of interest peculiar to the Manuscript, are seen to even greater advantage in the printed volume. This is a result of the records of the Society having been prepared for publication by one who is not only an expert in manuscript literature, but also a Masonic Antiquary and Archæologist whose credentials none will be found to gainsay.

There is an “Introduction” (or *Commentary*) of 36 pages, and to whatever extent the reader may have been previously equipped for an intelligent study of the document under review, it is scarcely open to doubt that his preparation for the task will have been enlarged by a perusal of the “forewords” of our Bro. RYLANDS.

The Names of the Members and Visitors, *together with all that can be gleaned from any known source, with regard to either the one or the other*, are given in distinct sections.

The “Signs of the Houses” where the Lodges met, from which there were Visitors, whose names, by the way, were not always entered in the records of the Society—are also tabulated, and among them are three, that cannot be identified in any list, and were presumably the outer tokens of taverns at which Lodges assembled that were not on the regular establishment.

The plates showing the jewels of the Society, the *facsimiles* of “The Fundamental Constitution and Orders,” and other material portions of the Manuscript, are worthy of all praise.

Although the Society of Musical “Brethren” was not a Lodge, its records nevertheless contain the only fragments that have come down to us of anything in the nature of what is ordinarily called “Lodge History,” in the southern kingdom, between the passing of Old Regulation XIII., forbidding the making of “Masters” in private Lodges, and the repeal of this enactment in November 1725.

It will have been seen that the Masonic Customs of the Society were by no means restricted to the qualification for membership being an ability to participate in Craft fellowship. The President and Consors were “Master” and “Wardens” respectively, and the first election of officers after the original formation of the brotherhood was held on the Day of St. John the Baptist, being the Annual Festival (and Assembly) of the Grand Lodge. The “making of Masons” was also practised, and *on one occasion* the ceremonial observances extended beyond the first step of Masonry, and comprised the working of the “Master’s part”—albeit in direct contravention of the then existing law of the Grand Lodge.

For this, indeed, the members appear to have been swiftly brought to book by the newly-established governing body of the *Metropolitan* Craft, but no submission followed, and the subsequent proceedings of the Society are confirmatory of all the other evidence that has yet become known with respect to the general dissatisfaction which was occasioned by the growing despotism of the Grand Lodge.

DR. STUKELEY, after narrating the circumstances attending his initiation (1721), tells us in his *Journal*,—“Immediately after that, it [*i.e.*, London Masonry] took a run & ran itself out of breath thro’ the folly of its members.” Upon this period of disorder I have greatly enlarged in previous volumes of our *Transactions* (*A.Q.C.* ii., 385; iv., 34; vi., 142; viii., 114-46; x., 137), and the accounts there given may serve as introductory of the subject to those readers who approach its study for the first time, and an *aide memoire* for others by whom they were perused either contemporaneously with, or subsequent to, their original publication.

That there was an organised rebellion against the authority of the newly-established Grand Lodge, there is no doubt whatever. To this many causes may have contributed, but the leading place of all must be assigned to ANDERSON’S *Constitutions* of 1723.

In 1724-26, the Author of that work was satirized with merciless severity in *The Secret History of the Free-Masons* (an appendix to the “Briscoe” copy of the so-called “old Gothic Constitutions”), *The Plain Dealer*, *The Grand Mystery of the Free Masons Discover’d*, *An Ode to the Grand Khaibar*, the various Manifestoes of the GORMOGONS, and (about the same date) in the well-known plate by WILLIAM HOGARTH, entitled “The Mystery of MASONRY brought to Light by the GORMOGONS” (*A.Q.C.*, viii., 139).

In the result, ANDERSON was driven out of Masonry for the space of eight years (1724-32), and seems to have become a sort of scapegoat, on whose back were laid all the sins of the Grand Lodge, which he was supposed to carry with him into the wilderness.

At this point, however, a few dates must be introduced, which I trust may facilitate a study of the somewhat intricate problem which will presently confront us.

Let me begin with the year 1723, which witnessed the publication of the first *Book of Constitutions*, containing,

"OLD REGULATION XIII.—"Apprentices must be admitted Masters and Fellow-Craft only here [*i.e.*, in the Grand Lodge], unless by a Dispensation."

At the close of 1724, or very early in 1725, four brethren were "Regularly Pass'd Masters in the Lodge of Hollis Street"; and in February, 1725, "A Lodge was held Consisting of Masters Sufficient for that Purpose In Order to Pass [certain brethren] Fellow Crafts." These extracts are taken from the "records" of the *Philo-Musicæ et Architecturæ Societas*, and in the same repository are to be found the remarkable entries under May 12th, 1725 (q.v.) upon which much remains to be said. Next to be cited is the following law enacted by the Grand Lodge:—November 27th, 1725.—"A Motion being made that such part of the 13th Article of the Gen^l Regulations relating to the making of Mast only at a quarterly Court may be repealed, and that the Mast of Each Lodge, with the consent of his Wardens and the Majority of the Brethren, being Mast may make Mst at their discretion. Agreed *Nem Con.*"

The importance of the evidence supplied by the records of the Musical Society is by no means restricted to the period of time coinciding with the publication (*in print*) of "Old Regulation XIII." (1723), and the repeal of that enactment in 1725. But the space accorded me in the present article will not permit of my doing more than pass in review those entries in the Manuscript which relate to the number of degrees known or practised at any time prior to 1726.

As a consequence of its open defiance of the authority of the Grand Lodge, the Society probably found a difficulty in keeping up the supply of members, and the numerous expulsions which are recorded towards the close of its career seem to point to the persons who were nominally *excluded*, having *voluntarily* severed their connection with what they deemed to be a clandestine association. This, however, together with every other point of general interest which can occur to the mind of a reader, will be found to have been carefully noticed by BRO. RYLANDS in his "Introduction."

Let me next bespeak the indulgence of my fellow-students, while I recapitulate certain conclusions which are advanced in my paper on "*The Degrees of Pure and Ancient Freemasonry.*" These form the basis of a theory, which is, that the language of "Old Regulation XIII.," importing a system of *two* degrees, having been ordinarily construed as denoting *three*, eventually resulted in the delusion becoming an accomplished fact. This *theory* rests on the validity of two "conclusions" that are referred to above, and there is a *third* I shall presently submit for consideration, which has an important bearing on the reception that should properly be accorded to the previous *two*.

The "Conclusions" advanced in my paper on "Degrees," to which notice has been particularly directed, were, firstly, that the actual meaning of O.R. XIII. was misunderstood by DR. FRANCIS DRAKE in 1726; and secondly, that JOHN PENNELL fell into a similar error, with regard to the same law, in 1730. The third "Conclusion" I am about to proceed with, and it is:—That the records of the *Philo-Musicæ et Architecturæ Societas* fail to prove that three steps of Masonry were worked in London in 1725.

I am not, of course, entitled to assume, that in my previous article on "Degrees," the inferences that appeared to myself to be clearly deducible from the evidence are such as to carry conviction to any other minds. But among them are *two* points, and the establishment of *both* is essential to the success of my general argument. In the "Article" under notice I contend, with at least reasonable probability in the case of FRANCIS DRAKE, and in moral certainty in that of JOHN PENNELL, that each of these worthies had no actual knowledge of a *third* degree, and only *supposed* one to exist.

Still, even if it be conceded for the moment, that the "Speech" of the Junior Grand Warden of York in 1726, and the Irish *Constitutions* of 1730, refer to an imaginary and not a real third step of Masonry, there remains for consideration whether the minutes of the Musical Society under the year 1725 repose on a similar basis of unreality, or whether in their mention of three distinct degrees, the terms used in the Manuscript are to be regarded as possessing the meaning which they most naturally convey.

It was with respect to this particular item of the evidence that—in my previous article on “Degrees”—I asked the reader to hold his judgment in suspense, for it is quite clear that if three steps of Maonry were known and worked at London in 1725, there will be a diminishing probability of any less number being fixed upon as the *maximum* practised in any later year.

Before, however, commencing to analyse the various entries in the Manuscript which relate to the question of “Degrees,” it will be convenient if an outline is given of the leading facts of Masonic history, so far as they have any immediate bearing on the subject in hand, and can be gleaned from other sources of authority than the records of the music-loving brethren of 1725-27.

I shall begin with the Constitutions of 1723, where we meet for the first time in the printed or manuscript literature of the *South*, with the terms Entered Apprentice and Fellow Craft or Master, which were borrowed from the (Operative) Masonic phraseology of the *North*. We are now aware that Entered Apprentice was used in O.R. XIII. (1723) to denote the first, and Fellow Craft or Master the second and last degree. But this has only recently been the case. The generation before our own believed that three degrees, and not merely *two*, are mentioned in the General Regulations of 1723. Again looking back, the delusion can be traced without a break to 1738. How long indeed prior to the publication of the *Constitutions* of the latter year the hallucination had existed, cannot be positively affirmed, but we shall hardly err if we conclude that it must have had its origin contemporaneously with the promulgation of the *Constitutions* of 1723. JOHN PENNELL (1730) evidently, and FRANCIS DRAKE (1726) apparently, failed to grasp the fact that in O.R. XIII., “Fellow Craft” and “Master” meant one and the same thing. That a more correct interpretation was placed upon those terms by the Founders and Members of the *Philo-Musicæ et Archetecturæ Societas*, I utterly disbelieve, nor is there a shred of *untarnished* evidence from which their superior insight into the real meaning of ANDERSON’S ambiguous phraseology can be implied. On any other supposition they would have realised that *two* and not *three* degrees were mentioned in the *Constitutions* of 1723—which, if accepted as a working hypothesis, will only land us in a greater difficulty, as we shall then have to conclude that the Masonry practised by the Musical Society was an enlargement of the system known to and recognised by the Grand Lodge.

Of what the authorized “system” consisted, we are told, not only in the first *Book of Constitutions*, but also, more plainly, in the minutes of the Lodge at the SWAN AND RUMMER, constituted at London, in 1726. Two degrees (and no more) are mentioned in the *Constitutions* of 1723, and the same number were worked in the Lodge at the SWAN AND RUMMER, in 1727. Upon the weight and authority which attach to the early records of this Lodge I have already remarked in my article on “Degrees.” Their testimony, indeed, does not cease with the second, but extends to the third decade of the eighteenth century. My immediate point, however, is to show, that apart from certain entries in the manuscript volume of the Musical Society, there is no other documentary evidence which will serve as a possible foundation for the belief that three steps of Masonry were in existence, for some time prior to the demise of that Association, in 1727.

If I succeed in carrying the reader with me, then the short point we shall next have to determine is, whether the testimony of the “Manuscript” last referred to is conclusive with respect to an expansion of the original system of *two* degrees, having taken place at least five years before the appearance of PRICHARD’S Spurious Ritual of 1730.

Bro. RYLANDS observes,—“It is quite clear from the Records left by this Masonic and Music-loving Society that in February, 1725, after having been ‘made a Mason’ the Brother was pass’d Fellow Craft, in a Lodge consisting of Masters sufficient for that purpose: that on and before December, 1724, men were ‘made Masons,’ and ‘regularly pass’d Masters,’ no mention being made of the intermediate degree of Fellow Craft; and that in May, 1725, the same brethren who were ‘pass’d Fellow Crafts’ in February, 1725, were ‘pass’d Masters’; as also that it was possible at that date to pass one Brother both Fellow Craft and Master, and another Brother Fellow Craft alone, at the same meeting, both of them having been ‘made Masons’ some time previously. Hence it is certain that at this period, when the old term is used, ‘made a Mason,’ it did not include everything that was to be known, but that there were two more steps, Fellow Craft and Master Mason, which could be either given separately or together, as was thought fit, or as occasion required; or it may be perhaps as the candidate was prepared to pay.” (*Introd.* xxii.)

The above is an excellent description of certain items in the Manuscript at which may be termed their *face value*. The external evidence, indeed, appears to be both clear

and convincing. But the whole testimony requires to be very carefully sifted, and to again quote from Bro. RYLANDS :—" The opening sentences, describing the foundation of the Society, are, it will be noticed, almost without punctuation. This account of an event which took place on the 18th February, 1725, was probably not engrossed in the *Minute Book* until some time after it happened." (*Ibid.*, xxiii.)

Then, in a footnote, the Editor says :—" The clerical error (p. 43) 1726 being written for 1725, might suggest the idea that the minutes were written up by the scribe in the year 1726. On the 26th of May, in that year, a payment was made to CONINGSBY MOORE ' for entering fair the Orders . . . till the 30th of December last past '."

Returning to the text of the " Introduction," our Bro. RYLANDS, in connection with the account of the foundation of the Society on the 18th of February, 1725, remarks : " It is a long sentence occupying pages 6, 7 and 8 ; the mis-placement and omission of capital letters adds to the difficulty caused by the imperfect punctuation, and it would be easy to read the sentence in several different ways. They might indeed be so understood as to throw a doubt on the supposition that the Society held a Lodge, before the foundation, in order to make some of the Founders eligible. The intention of the composers of these opening sentences must, however, not be overlooked. The idea evidently was to give a history of the Masonic rank of the eight who had come together to found the Society, and to record that a certain number of them were already Master Masons, ' sufficient for the purpose ' of passing other intended Founders to the degree of a Fellow Craft. (*Ibid.*)

" The statement," continues Bro. RYLANDS, " about the Lodge of Masters sufficient for the purpose, in which GULSTON acted as *Senior Warden*, being made, seems to point to there having been some special reason for its introduction into the sentence " (*Ibid.*, xxiv.). " It seems probable that GULSTON being a Master Mason, and acting as Senior Warden, there being no Master present, performed the ceremony, otherwise it seems strange that no Master is mentioned. Had GULSTON been the Master of a Lodge, it would most probably have been stated, as the fact might have removed a difficulty. In the *Constitutions* of 1738, page 145, it is stated that " The Wardens are chosen from among the Master Masons [an expression, by the way, carrying with it an entirely different meaning in the *Constitutions* of 1723], and no Brother can be Master of a Lodge till he has acted as Warden somewhere, except in extraordinary cases ; or when a Lodge is to be formed where none can be had : For these 3 Master-Masons, tho' never Masters or Wardens of Lodges before, may be constituted Master and Wardens of the new Lodge. But no Number without 3 Master-Masons can form a Lodge."

" In this charge," adds Bro. RYLANDS, " is probably the reason for the statement being introduced that four of the Founders had been Regularly pas't Masters, in a just and perfect Lodge at Hollis Street, and it was considered that they were sufficient to hold a Lodge, and perform ceremonies. GULSTON acted as Senior Warden, and perhaps this was a preliminary to the statement that ' immediately after which [the Lodge held to pass the Fellow-Crafts] vizt., the 18th day of February A.D. 1724 [*i.e.*, 1725]. He the said MR. WILLM. GULSTON was chosen President of the said Society . . . who chose COORT KNEVIT ESQR. and MR. WILLIAM JONES his Censors.' It must be remembered that although the second Article reads, ' That such President or Master should have power to appoint two Censors or his Senior and Junior *Warden*, for the time being,' the object was not to found a *new* Lodge, but to carry on the ceremonies of Masonry, as necessary for the purpose required, at a Masonic Meeting held in the Society." (*Ibid.* xxv.)

Several members of the QUATUOR CORONATI Lodge have not only examined " Additional MS. No. 23,202 " in the library of the British Museum, but have written, from their own points of view, in regard to the value of its contents. But to the Editor of our *Transactions* is due the singular merit of having been the first to call attention to certain portions of the Manuscript, the importance of which had previously been overlooked. For example, the accounts of the foundation of the Musical Society, and of the meeting held on the 12th of May, 1725, neither of which was recorded at the time, and one or both may have been " entered up " from loose notes or oral testimony long after the events occurred to which they relate.

There is also the suggestion that the details given of the foundation of the Society, represent not so much a natural (and unadulterated) recital of what actually took place, as a carefully prepared and *ex post facto* statement with respect to the qualifications of the Founders for the performance of duties, in the execution of which they had committed what were deemed grave " irregularities " by the Grand Lodge.

The Editorial belief that the opening words of the "records" are in substance a defence by the eight founders of their subsequent action as Masons, I fully share, and I also think that the entries under the 12th of May, 1725, are a *fragment* of an even more elaborate vindication of the "regularity" of the Masonic proceedings of the Society *down to a comparatively late period of its existence.*

The canons of criticism, therefore, to which we should naturally resort, on the supposition that the narrative of events was entered in the Minute-book immediately after their occurrence, would be entirely out of place if we are to assume (consistently with the evidence), that the members of the Society, in the two important recitals to which attention has been directed, had almost exclusively in view the setting out of certain alleged facts, which *from motives of policy*, were made to antedate various Masonic proceedings of the Association that had given umbrage to the Grand Lodge.

Bro. RYLANDS, in explanation of the opening words of the narrative, quotes from the *Constitutions* of 1738, and the possibility of much that he cites being pertinent to the matter in hand must be conceded. Many of the customs which ANDERSON places on record for the first time in 1738, may have actually existed in (or before) 1723. But on the subject of degrees, as known and practised in London with the early sanction of the Grand Lodge—the "Father of Masonic History," in his latest publication, is *par excellence*, the most untrustworthy of all the "established authorities" upon whom it has been the fashion to rely. One and one *make* two, he tells us in the *Constitutions* of 1723; but one and one *made* three in the year last cited, as we learn from the *Constitutions* of 1738.

In the earlier work (1723), the passage in Charge IV. corresponding with the extract already given from the *Constitutions* of 1738, reads:—"No Brother can be a WARDEN until he has pass'd the part of a FELLOW-CRAFT: nor a MASTER until he has acted as a WARDEN." There is nothing whatever about three "Master Masons" being required to "form a Lodge," nor is any higher degree than that of "Fellow-Craft" mentioned in the CHARGE.

That the presence, however, of some members of the then "Superior Degree" (*i.e.*, Master or Fellow Craft), may have been customary on such an occasion, even in 1723, is a supposition which not only tends to explain the reason why certain statements appear in the records of the Musical Society, but is also confirmed by other documentary evidence of both older and later date.

That seven of the eight Founders of the Society were "made Masons in a just and perfect Lodge" is one of the *two* leading features of the Manuscript. The other consists of the avouchment that "a Lodge was held, consisting of Masters, sufficient for that purpose, in order to pass [three brethren] fellow-crafts, in the performance of which, Mr. WILLIAM GULSTON acted as Senior Warden."

To take these in their order:—In *Sloane MS.*, No. 3329 (Brit. Mus. Lib. 7), of *uncertain date*, will be found:—

(Q.) "Where were you made a Mason."

(A.) "In a just and perfect or just and Lawfull Lodge."

(Q.) "What is a just and perfect or just and Lawfull Lodge."

(A.) "A just and perfect Lodge is two Inter printices two fellow craftes and two Mast^r more or fewer . . . but if need require five will serve that is two Inter printices two fellow Craftes and one Mast^r on the highest hill or lowest Valley of the World without the crow of a Cock or the bark of a Dogg."

The other Spurious Rituals belonging to the first group of Masonic Catechisms—which ends with PRICHARD'S pamphlet of 1730—cover almost identically the same ground, though in the composition of a "Just and Perfect Lodge," the "Answers" are characterised by some slight discrepancies. For example, *A Mason's Examination* (1723) requires the presence of "A Master, two Wardens, four Fellows, five Apprentices"; *The Grand Mystery of Free-Masons* (1724), of "Seven right and perfect Masons"; *The Mystery of Free-Masonry* (August, 1730), of "A Master, two Wardens, and four Fellows," with the proviso that "one of them must be a working Mason"; and *Masonry Dissected* (October, 1730), of "One Master, two Wardens, two Fellow Crafts, and two enter'd Prentices." In the last-named tract, there also occurs, under the heading of "THE MASTER'S DEGREE":—

- “ (Q.) Where was you passed Master ?
 (A.) In a perfect lodge of Masters.
 (Q.) What makes a perfect lodge of Masters ?
 (A.) Three.”

Passing to the actual (or acknowledged) written traditions of the Freemasons, we meet with, in the *Briscoe* copy of the “ Old Gothic Constitutions ” (printed in 1724) :—

“ 5 . . . that no Mason, nor Fellow, take any Allowance to make Masons without the Assent of his Fellows, at the least Five or Six.”

The *Roberts* version (printed in 1722) has :—

- “ I. That no person . . . be accepted as a free mason, unless he shall have a Lodge of five free Masons at the least, whereof one to be a Master or Warden of that Limit or Division, wherein such Lodge shall be kept, and another to be a workman of the Trade of free Masonry.”

It will be recollected that in the minutes of the Music-loving association, the purchase of a copy of “ The Mason's old Constitutions *being wanted* by the Society,” is recorded under July 21st, 1726.

The book referred to, it is reasonable to conclude, was the *Roberts* and *not* the *Briscoe* print, as the former bore the title of “ THE OLD CONSTITUTIONS belonging to the . . . Free and Accepted MASONs ” ; while the latter was described as “ The Secret History of the Freemasons.”

The *Roberts* tract, of 1722, had probably been in the possession of one or more of the founders for some time prior to the acquisition of a copy for the common use of the Society. The publication, it would also appear, must have been carefully studied by the ritual mongers of the time. Of this we have a convincing proof in the proviso with regard to the presence of “ a working Mason ” being essential to the due formation of “ a true and Perfect Lodge,” which was evidently borrowed by the compiler of *The Mystery of Free-Masonry* (1730), from what are best known as the “ New Articles,” a feature of the “ Old Constitutions ” peculiar to a remarkable group, consisting of the “ Roberts, Harleian 1942, Grand Lodge No. 2, Macnab,” and “ Rawlinson ” texts of these ancient documents.

That the allusions to “ a just and perfect Lodge,” and to the *Præses* of the “ Philo-Musical Society ” having acted as “ Senior Warden,” which appear in the Manuscript under review, were introduced with some special object, would appear free from doubt, and what that object was has already been suggested. Before, however, proceeding to comment any further on the evidence which has already been laid before the reader, room must be found for a short extract from the SCHAW STATUTES of 1598 :—

“ *Item*, that na fallow of Craft nor maister be ressaute nor admittit, without the numer of sex maisteris and twa prenteissis, *the wardene of that ludge being one of the said sex.*” (Italics mine.)

Upon what sources of authority WILLIAM GULSTON and his co-founders relied, *when the entries were actually drawn up*, which were obviously intended to ward off the suspicion that had arisen with regard to the regularity of their proceedings as Freemasons, we can only speculate—though perhaps it may be possible to do so without overstepping the boundaries of reasonable conjecture. All the Spurious Rituals of the first (and earliest) group—beginning with *Sloane MS. 3329 (temp. incest.)* or *A Mason's Examination* (1723), and ending with PRICHARD'S pamphlet of 1730—are of one accord in the testimony they present with respect to the sanctuary at the Initiation of a Mason being “ a just and perfect Lodge.” Nor can we doubt that in regard to what may be called the ordinary, and as it were outward formalities which took place in advance of the ceremonies, the actual customs of the Lodges are mirrored with more or less fidelity in these otherwise delusive catechisms.

The reference to GULSTON, before his election as *Præses* of the Society having acted as “ Senior Warden,” is perhaps amply explained by the entry in the records under July 21st, 1726. “ The Mason's Old Constitutions ” acquired by the Society may be easily identified as that we now describe as the *Roberts' Print*, and the paragraph relating to a “ Warden ” (already given) is one of a series of “ New Articles ” peculiar to a group or Family of the Manuscript Constitutions, which were certainly *in use* during the last half of the seventeenth century, and apparently held the first place as accredited documents of the *English Craft*, during the period immediately preceding the era of Grand Lodges, and until some time *after* the appearance of ANDERSON'S authorised “ *Constitutions* ” of 1723.

It will have been observed, that of the Spurious Rituals forming the first group, a majority declare the presence of *Wardens* to be essential to the composition of "a Just and Perfect Lodge." All these catchisms, with the exception of "*A Mason's Examination*," (1723), betray a *Scottish* origin, of which, indeed, Old Regulation XIII., was probably the fountain-head, though it is remotely possible that the stream of rituals which swept over South Britain during the Epoch of Transition, had found its way by some devious channel from unknown sources in the Northern Kingdom. On this latter supposition the Codes of Regulations, drawn up by WILLIAM SCHAW, for the observance of the *Scottish Masons* of 1598 and 1599, might invite a comparison with the "Roberts" group or "Family" of the Manuscript Constitutions, "forms" of which are supposed to have been extensively used by the English *Freemasons* in the period of time immediately following the promulgation of the SCHAW STATUTES, and ending with the practical supersession of the Old system of Masonry by the New.

The two passages of primary importance in *Additional MS.*, 23,202, demand attention from more than one point of view. Taken at their *face-value* and *in conjunction*, they may be held to indicate that CHARLES COTTON and PAPILLON BALL after having been "made Masons" and *before being* "passed Masters," received the intermediate degree of Fellow Craft.

Standing alone, however, the entries under May 12th, 1725, are not inconsistent with the supposition that the ceremony of "passing" in the case of all the four "Brothers" was one and the same. Master and Fellow Craft were then terms importing the same meaning, in the phraseology of the Grand Lodge, and it is scarcely within the limits of possibility that a *grade* of Scottish Operative Masonry, which was foisted on the English Craft in 1723, could have been bisected, transformed into a brace of *degrees*, and worked by London brethren in 1725? Moreover, if a second and third degree are referred to, why were *both* conferred on F. X. GEMINIANI, and only *one* on JAMES MURRAY? I have elsewhere suggested, that (avoiding the question of *mala fides*) the "Superior degree" may in the first instance (February, 1725) have been conferred incorrectly, and three months later—with strict regularity upon COTTON and BALL (*Conc. Hist.* 312). The difficulty which apparently existed in STUKELEY's time (1721) of finding a sufficient instructed *quorum* to work the "Master's Part" (*A.Q.C.*, vi. 141), we may reasonably suppose to have been increased, rather than lessened, by the misleading terms of Old Regulation XIII.

But the "records" of 1725 must be subjected to a more critical test. It is held by Courts of Law "that, *in the absence of all suspicion of sinister motives*, a fair presumption arises that entries made in the ordinary way of business are correct, since, the process of invention implying trouble, it is easier to state what is true than what is false." (Taylor, Law of Evidence, 574.)

The Minutes of the Philo-Musicæ Society may be compared to those of a Lodge, and the proceedings of Lodges as embodied in their Minute Books, we are accustomed to rely upon as collected *de die in diem* with regard to the matters which they relate. Let us suppose, however, that a Lodge is said to have committed irregularities on a certain date; and that we examine the minutes and find the charges to be refuted. Let us further suppose, that on a closer view, we find that the particular minutes on which the exoneration depends, were entered in the book much later than the occurrences which they profess to record. In a moment "a suspicion of sinister motives" would arise, the "face-value" of the postliminious entries would become an illusion, and an atmosphere of mystery would encircle the whole case.

The parallel might be extended, but I shall only add that if the minutes of the Musical Society were those of a *regular* Lodge, they would be the earliest we possess in the South. *Two* degrees and no more were worked at the SWAN AND RUMMER, in 1727. But the entries in *Additional MS.* 23,202, if taken at their "face-value"—point out with equal plainness, that three ceremonies and no less were practised at the QUEEN'S HEAD (afterwards the APOLLO) in 1725. We should, however, subject to a very rigid scrutiny, the records of a "*regular* Lodge," comprising, let us say, a Minute Book with entries ranging from 1725 to 1727, which preserved an unbroken silence with respect to a plurality of Degrees, *except in a solitary instance*, when *on the same day* the working of both a *second* and a *third* step is recorded.

The account of the Foundation of the "Philo-Musicæ Society," as so well observed by Bro. RYLANDS, may be read in several different ways—which, of itself, is not a little confusing. Assuming, however, that we hit upon the right text, or to be more precise

that to the unpunctuated recitals in the Manuscript we affix the proper stops, there is another difficulty, and one which I do not myself see any way of surmounting. The preliminary statement of the Founders and the entries under May 12th, 1725, were in each case recorded in the Manuscript volume *after an interval of time*. Were they drafted at the same date, or are we to suppose that one had precedence of the other? If the "Minute" was written before the "Preamble," then the entry relating to COTTON and BALL, in the former, will bear a construction totally different from what may be implied if the wording of the "Preamble" is to be regarded as having been "perfected" in the first instance.

On the one supposition, we might assume that the expediency of making COTTON and BALL figure in the quality of Fellow-Crafts, was an afterthought; while on the other, and taking into consideration the blank page which precedes the Minute of May 12th, 1725, the evidence may be held to point in the direction of *really experienced brethren* having been called in, by whom the ceremony of the "superior degree" was accurately performed, and (in *the three several ways* practised at that time) as accurately recorded.

Many other speculations tending to negative the idea that a *maximum* of three degrees is shewn by the evidence to have existed in 1725, might be advanced. None of these, it is true, would be more than *conjectures*, but all, by a long way, would be less violently improbable than a *postulation of any kind*, resting on the supposition that a tri-graded system of Masonry had been *evolved* within two years from the publication of DR. ANDERSON'S misleading utterances in the *Constitutions* of 1723.

The presence of Fellow Crafts at a "making" was required (as we have seen) by the Spurious Rituals of early date, and the records of the ROYAL CUMBERLAND LODGE, Bath (present No. 41) show that *three Fellow Crafts* (besides the Master and Wardens, six Masters, and four "passed Masters") were among the members in attendance on May 18th, 1733, at the "Constitution" of that body as a "Regular Lodge." Precisely the same number of Fellow Crafts—CHARLES COTTON, PAPILLON BALL, and THOMAS MARSHALL—were "passed" to that degree immediately before the Foundation of the Musical Society, and presumably for a similar reason to that which must have actuated the Bath brethren of 1733, that is to say, a desire that the Masonic custom regulating the composition of "A Just and Perfect Lodge" should be strictly complied with. The paragraph referred to in the Manuscript of 1725, runs:—"And before We Founded this Society A Lodge was held *Consisting of Masters Sufficient for that Purpose* [italics mine] In order to Pass CHARLES COTTON" and the two others. The words italicised seem to me suggestive of the belief that they were inspired by the law of November 27th in the same year (repealing Old Regulation XIII.), and if so, that portion of the "Fundamental Constitution and Orders," could not possibly have been drafted until nine or ten months, at the very least, *after* the foundation of the "Philo Musicæ Society," in February, 1725. Why it was that three of the Founders were described as having been passed as Fellow Crafts, and not as Masters, which latter expression would have been more in accordance with the terms of the law of November, 1725, may have arisen either from a right interpretation having been placed on the meaning of these titles (as importing one and the same thing), or the recital may have "recorded" a wholly imaginary occurrence, which for purposes of their own the Brethren meeting at the APOLLO wished to be believed as having actually taken place.

Taken separately, the references to COTTON and BALL in the account of the foundation of the Society, and the Minute of May 12th, 1725, respectively, might in either instance signify that these brethren were recipients of the only "Superior degree." But *read together, and accepted at their "face-value,"* the existence of two distinct degrees beyond that of Entered Apprentice is plainly to be inferred. This conclusion, however, in my own judgment, is entirely rebutted by the other features of the case upon which stress has already been laid. In the absence, indeed, of any "sinister motive" from which a garbling of the records might be presumed, the circumstance that WILLIAM GULSTON, COORT KNEVIT and EDMUND SQUIRE were "Regularly Pass'd Masters in the . . . Lodge of Hollis Street," in February, 1725, while COTTON, BALL, and MARSHALL, also *belonging to the same Lodge*, were only passed Fellow Crafts almost immediately afterwards, and on a literal construction of the Minute of May 12th following, the first two did not become "Masters" until that date. It should not, however, escape our observation, that the *three* Fellow Crafts—COTTON, BALL, and MARSHALL, were passed in a Lodge "Consisting of *Masters* sufficient for that purpose." Why "Masters" in this connection? The explanation which, on the whole, seems the most feasible, is, that all the six Founders whose names are last cited were admitted *to the same degree*, which in strict propriety was *then* as rightly described by the title of the present second as by that of the present third step of Masonry. A similar explanation, that is to say, the circumstance that Fellow Craft and Master were

terms of indifferent application, will also tend to reconcile the apparent discrepancies in the Minutes of May 12th, 1725.

The *combined testimony* of the PREAMBLE and the MINUTE, has next to be considered. COTTON and BALL are stated to have been passed "Fellow Crafts" in one and passed "Masters" in the other. The solution of the problem, I think, will be found in the conclusion that the *two* portions of the manuscript volume were compiled *after* the repeal of Old Regulation XIII., in November, 1725; that they were drafted by different hands and inspired by different brains; and lastly, that in neither instance can the entries in the book be regarded as *bona fide* recitals of what actually took place.

Three distinct degrees are undoubtedly referred to in the Spurious Ritual of SAMUEL PRICHARD, and the same number of Masonic steps, it is very generally believed, may have existed for a considerable period before *Masonry Dissected* saw the light. Moreover, there appears to be a strong disinclination on the part of many (or perhaps most) writers of the Craft, to admit the possibility of PRICHARD having *invented* not alone the contents of his curious catechism, but also the frame work of degrees into which it is compressed. A moment's reflection, however, will satisfy the candid reader, that an evolutionary process which, as the fair meaning of the evidence assures us, had its beginning in 1723, and attained its culminating point in 1730, could not have progressed very far in the direction of its ultimate goal at the close of 1724, or during the first half of 1725. Degrees (or steps in Masonry) which attained their full proportions in the space of seven years (1730), could only have been, as it were, *in embryo* at the expiration of two (1725).

As it would appear to myself, the flood of Spurious Rituals, all savouring of the Scottish idiom, which swept over the land *after* the publication of the *Constitutions* of 1723, was perhaps a more potent factor in the expansion of the original system of degrees, than even the utterances of ANDERSON himself in the "Regulations" of that year. They were translated into the French, German, Dutch, and probably other Continental languages, and I think must have been largely instrumental, not only in re-fashioning the old fabric of *English* Masonry, but also in communicating the impulse which resulted in the wholesale manufacture of Degrees, claiming to be of Scottish origin, and of unquestionable superiority over those of the Craft.

With respect to a point on which I have briefly adverted on an earlier page, a number of subsidiary puzzles are laid before us in "Additional MS.," 23,202, and these I cannot entirely pass over, while upon them I must not enlarge. For example, if we concede the possibility of a *second and third degree* being referred to in the Minute of May 20th, 1725, can any explanation be suggested why *both* were conferred on F. X. GEMINIANI, and only *one* on JAMES MURRAY. Then, again, there is the case of THOMAS MARSHALL, who was "passed Fellow Craft" at the same time as COTTON and BALL, but (so far as we are informed) received no further degree, though a founder, and until March, 1726, a member of the "Philo-Musicæ Society." It is also worthy of attention that no visitors at the meetings are described as "Fellow Crafts"—which of itself (in the absence of a presumed "sinister motive") would be a suspicious circumstance, taken in conjunction with the *two definite allusions* in the Manuscript to the existence of this degree.

The privilege of conferring the "Superior Degree in Masonry" was taken from the English Lodges, as promulgated in the *Constitutions* of 1723, and restored to them in 1725. During the continuance of the prohibition, the Society was founded the records of which form the subject of the present review. There are no other documents of any kind throwing the faintest light upon the English Masonry of contemporaneous date. The publication therefore, of these interesting Minutes, was of paramount necessity in the true interests of Masonic research, and it only remains to be stated, in concluding my remarks, that of all the Antiquarian Reprints issued from time to time by this Lodge, there is no other, perhaps, of equal importance with the volume under review, nor has any one of the series been entrusted to abler hands in its preparation for the press.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE.—The statement in the Manuscript Volume (Addl. MS. 23,202), that the Musical Society was founded and that three persons were "made and admitted" *on the same day*, is one upon which I had intended to offer some remarks. But having omitted to do so in the proper place (*ante p.* 238), I shall merely invite the attention of the reader to the prodigious length (52 pp.) of the proceedings *recorded* under the date of February 18th, 1725; and to the curious circumstance that the qualifications of the Founders for the exercise of Masonic functions are carefully—not to say speciously—*pleaded*, in advance of the subsequent entries relating to the admission of the *earliest* Initiates, *viz.*, Thomas Shuttleworth and the two Serving Brethren.

XIV.

ORIGIN OF THE ROYAL ARCH.

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I.

[*Masonic Monthly*, Vol. 1, pp. 6-9, July, 1882.]

In a recent deliverance, Bro. Jacob Norton has discussed at much length, the interesting problem which is stated above.

Our Brother makes numerous "points," but the leading one, or perhaps I should be more accurate in saying, his chief deduction from the evidence he submits, is the conclusion that the Royal Arch Degree was introduced into the "Modern" system by Preston's "Mother Lodge," the "Caledonian" (now No. 134), an early seceder from the "Ancients."

The reasons he adduces in favour of this supposition, are the following:—A Chapter, afterwards their Grand Chapter, was established by the Moderns in 1765, and by an original regulation of this body it was provided:—

"That the Companions belonging to, and having been exalted in the Caledonian Chapter, or any Chapter in the country or abroad, being properly vouched for, shall be admitted visitors in this Chapter on payment of 2s. 6d. each."

Bro. Norton then cites the prominence of a Bro. John McLean in the concerns of the newer institution, and his membership, some years afterwards, of the Caledonian Chapter, which latter he finds in a printed list of 1788-90 as No. 2 on the roll of "Modern" Chapters.

This Caledonian Chapter is next assumed to have been identical with the body of the same name, referred to in the regulation quoted above; and Bro. Norton argues that the Caledonian Lodge, having no doubt worked the Royal Arch whilst subordinate to the "Ancients," continued the practice under the "Modern" sanction; and that the Caledonian Chapter—the connecting link between the Royal Arch Masonry of the rival systems—was the result.

In the first place, however, the Royal Arch Degree was at this period only conferred by the "Ancients" on whom they termed the "legal representative" of each lodge—to wit, the Master—and Preston's Mother Lodge, the "Caledonian," constituted by the "Ancients" in April, 1763, and by the "Moderns" in November, 1764, if we allow a slight margin for the period of uncertainty which must have preceded the apostasy, could hardly have had more than one or two brethren in its ranks, at the outside, eligible for the distinction of the Arch. Secondly, if we examine the Ahiman Recons, or Books of Constitutions of the Ancients, for 1756 and 1764, there is to be found no allusion to a Chapter. The Royal Arch Lodge at Jerusalem is spoken of, Dr. Dassigny is quoted approvingly (it should be recollected that by this writer the degree is limited to rulers of the Craft), and brethren are pointedly referred to "who think themselves Royal Arch Masons without passing the chair in regular form."

In the next place, Bro. Norton's facts are a little awry, in regard to the earliest Chapter being identical with the No. 2 of 1788-90.

There is nothing whatever in the minutes of the "Modern" Society to warrant a belief that the original "Caledonian" ever came on its roll. Many Chapters, indeed, of this name were constituted. In a printed list in 1790, we find at the No. 11—"Kilwinning or Caledonian Lodge: This Chapter is a revival of No. 2"—whilst No. 2 itself, in the same list (doubtless the Chapter cited by Bro. Norton), the "Caledonian" is thus referred to in the Grand Chapter register: "17 Sept., 1790. All the members of the Royal Cumberland Chapter, No. 8, I deemed to be members of this Chapter, by vote of the Grand or Royal Chapter, in consideration of their fidelity and zeal."

This may have been a promotion* "after the manner of the Ancients"; but, at all events, it is quite clear that in the shifting of numbers and the filling up of gaps on its roll, the Atholl practice was observed by the "Modern" Grand Chapter.

No. 1, the "Restauration Lodge, or the Chapter of the Rock and Fountain of Shilo," constituted in 1773, very soon lapsed into abeyance, and a note records: "Lay dormant until 1796, when it was revived by the officers of the Grand or Royal Chapter."

* No. 2 was originally constituted at Manchester as the "Euphrates Lodge, or the Chapter of the Garden of Eden," 14th July, 1773.

As an instance of the confusion which prevailed, I may add that in October, 1773, a constitution was granted to the *Bro. Maclean*, of whom *Bro. Norton* speaks, and others, by the name of "The Most Sacred Lodge or the Chapter of Universality, No. 6." This Chapter does not appear at all in the printed list of 1790; but in a MS. note in the records I find at the No. 6: "Euphrates Lodge, or Chapter of the Garden of Eden"; thus indicating, that in all probability, Nos. 2 and 6 had changed places; the "Most Sacred Lodge," etc., of *Bro. McLean* becoming, it may be, the "Caledonian" Chapter, which fills the number in 1790?

I cannot agree with *Bro. Norton*, "that *Laurence Dermott* was the father of Royal Arch Masonry amongst the Ancients." This remarkable Masonic administrator was "admitted" to the degree of the Royal Arch in Lodge No. 26, Dublin, in 1746, the same year in which he served his Mastership. That the Degree or grade was worked in Ireland at this period, we already know from *Dr. Dassigny's* publication; and the supposition has much to recommend it, that the communication of the secrets of the Royal Arch was the earliest form in which any esoteric teaching was specially linked with the incident of Lodge Mastership, or, in other words, that the *degree* of the Royal Arch was the complement of the Master's *grade*. Out of this was ultimately evolved the degree of Installed Master, a ceremony unknown in the "Modern" system until the first decade of the present century, and of which I can trace no sign amongst the "Ancients" until the growing practice of conferring the "Arch" upon brethren not legally qualified to receive it, brought about a *constructive* passing through the chair, which by qualifying candidates not otherwise eligible, naturally entailed the introduction of a ceremony, *additional* to the simple forms known to *Payne*, *Anderson*, and *Desaguliers*.

A further reason why the *Caledonian Lodge* cannot be regarded as having brought over Royal Arch Masonry from the rival camp is afforded by the fact of *William Preston* never having taken this degree. He was closely connected with his mother-lodge for at least several years after 1764, and from an early period one of its leading members.

The names, indeed, of the brethren who formed the "Grand or Royal Chapter," forcibly suggest, that the idea of appropriating the degree emanated from the ruling spirits of the "Modern" Grand Lodge. *Lord Blaney*, the Grand Master, was "passed to the Royal Arch" in June, 1766, and officiated as presiding officer of the Chapter in the following July, on which latter occasion *Bro. Haseltine* (afterwards Grand Secretary) was "exalted."

In conclusion, I may add, that *Bro. Norton* is scarcely justified, by the evidence he has brought forward, in assuming that, with the exception of the "Caledonian" Chapter, there were not, "outside of the jurisdiction of the 'Ancients' any Chapters, either in this country or abroad, in 1765." There is, on the contrary, the same authority for believing that there were such bodies, as for conceding the prior existence of the "Caledonian" Chapter, *viz.*, the recital of a regulation appearing in the Minutes of the "Moderns."

I am of opinion that the expression *Chapter* was coined by the "Moderns." It nowhere appears—at least I have not met with it—in any "Atholl" records before 1765, not, indeed, until several years later; and it seems very probable that the whole machinery of the Royal Arch, was never adequately appreciated by the "Ancients," until the novelty was invested with so much importance by those who purloined it from them, and who decorated and embellished the degree with many fanciful alterations and additions of their own creation.

II.

[*Freemasons' Chronicle*, 1893.]

In the transactions of the *Quat. Coronati Lodge*, No. 2076, Vol. VI., pt. 2, there is an article on *the Ancient Stirling Lodge*, from the pen of *Bro. Hughan*, which it will be convenient to consider in connection with the late reprint of *Dr. Dassigny's Serious and Impartial Enquiry* (1744); the "Introductory Sketch and Royal Arch Masonry, 1743-1893," prefixed to the same; and the review of both which appeared in the last number of the *Transactions* (vi. 77).

In *Dassigny's* work we meet with the oldest printed reference to the Royal Arch, and our Brother *Hughan* in the prolegomena, attached to the reprint, furnishes the fullest and best account of that degree which is known to me.

Before its appearance, the earliest Lodge records containing any allusion to the Royal Arch, were supposed to be those of the old Lodge at *Fredericksburg*, Virginia, which held a "Royal Arch Lodge" on 22nd December, 1753, when three Brethren were "raised to the Degree of Royal Arch Mason."

Bro. Hughan, however, has recently claimed, on behalf of the Lodge at Stirling, a priority of ten, or at the very least, eight years, over its American Sister, in connection with this degree, and the proofs by which his position is supported I shall next proceed to examine.

A Committee of the Supreme Grand Chapter of Scotland, reported—21st March, 1818—that “after very mature and deliberate consideration of the several documents produced in support of their respective claims, they find that the Chapters holding of the Supreme Grand Royal Chapter *have produced* satisfactory evidence of their having existed in the knowledge and practice of Royal Arch Masonry, and have held regular meetings as Chapters of that Degree, since the periods set against their respective names, as follows, *viz.*—

“*Stirling* Rock Royal Arch Chapter, from the 30th July, 1743; Enoch Royal Arch Chapter, *Montrose*, from the 18th January, 1765; Operative Royal Arch Chapter, *Banff*, from the 25th August, 1766; *Linlithgow* Royal Arch Chapter, from the year 1768.”

My own opinion of the value of the “reports” of Committees on such points as the above is not a very high one, and I attach about as much importance to them as I do to the preambles of charters and Acts of Parliament. Moreover, in the case before us, the attestation ought certainly to be of the highest character that the subject will admit of, to induce us to believe that at Stirling, or anywhere else, regular meetings were held in 1743, as “*Chapters*” of the Degree.

This difficulty seems to have been felt by Bro. Hughan, for he says:—“Granting that the question as to the seniority of Stirling be left in abeyance so far as respects the Minute Book of 1743, the By-Laws of 1745 are still in evidence, and as they mention the term ‘Exalting’ [the reader will please take note that it is the ‘Introductory sketch of R.A. Masonry, 1743-1893,’ I am quoting from], and apply it to the ‘Excellent and Super-Excellent’ Degrees, the position is maintained all the same, for there is no other Chapter anywhere that can produce such testimony.”

In the same “sketch” or prolegomena, Bro. Hughan observes:—“Bro. Brown [G. Scribe E. Scotland] has made and sent me an extract from the By-Laws of the Lodge at Stirling, dated the 14th day of May, 1745. The Dues were then as follows,—

[Extract from the 8th By-Law.]

“Exalting Excellent and Super-Excellent, 5s.
Knights of Malta, 5s.”

“Bro. Brown says, ‘that no direct reference to the Royal Arch could be found in this Minute Book from 1741 onwards, only *Excellent and Super-Excellent*,’ but he believes that as a matter of fact *Super-Excellent* was the Royal Arch as then conferred in Scotland.”

But on getting the actual Minute Book into his own hands, Bro. Hughan found that the word “*Exalting*” had been inadvertently imported into the above transcript (as it should not have been), thereby lengthening the already strong chain of presumptive evidence by an imaginary link.

The portion of the 8th By-Law cited in the foregoing remarks, should really read:—

“Excellent and Super Excellent, five shillings sterling
and Knights of Malta five shillings sterling.”

But this is not all. The Code of Rules from which the last quotation has been carefully taken by Hughan, is *not* the original and separate Regulations of 1745, but a copy made about 1790.

Our Brother Hughan indeed says:—“The transcript seems to have been made from an old copy, doubtless of 1745, as stated, for the writer was evidently unable to decipher some portions, and therefore left them blank; and the general style of the regulations would do very well for that year, so that appearances certainly favour the belief that the foregoing transcript [*Supra*] of about the year 1790 was made from the original code of 1745.” (*A.Q.C.*, vi., 109.)

But a proneness to embellish their text has been a leading characteristic of all Masonic copyists from the time of Dr. James Anderson down to within living memory, and by far the most potent argument used by Bro. Hughan in support of the fidelity of the transcription seems to me to be the absence of any doubt in his own mind with respect to the legitimacy of the entries which he has taken under his protection.

Nor should we forget that in the recent transcription of 1892, or 1893, the word "Exalted" was wrongly, though inadvertently tacked on to the others, and what must have been the result of pure accident in our own time, may well have been paralleled by a similar haphazard in the past.

The possibility, or as I should prefer to put it, the probability, of a "pious fraud" having been committed by the Stirling Brethren of A.D. 1790, must also be considered.

With the article under review, Bro. Hughan prints an Appendix (vi. 112), entitled *Copy of "Charter" Made in 1822*. This "Charter" appears at the end of the Minute-book—Stirling Lodge—and the last minute is dated August 10th, 1822. According to the "Charter," professedly made by "David the first by the Grace of God King of Scots,"—

"itim That the free Masons in Stirling shall hold a Lodge for ever in the brugh of Stirling," etc.

"itim and that you mack instruck and teach the Masonry of St. Johns in all its pairts and secrets and as like Belted Knights and Cros leged Knights with armour," &c.

"Declared .: at Edinburgh The fifth day of March one thousand one hundred and forty seven years before these witnesses

"Prince, Henry my Son—Earle, John of Menteith—Earle, Duncan of Lennox—Herbert, Bishop of Glasgow—Robert, Bishop of St. Andrew—Gregory, Bishop of Dunkell, and Walter de Ridale."

["To which is affixed the King's seal which is all defaced A correct copy of the ancient Lodge Charter by a Brother "]

This pretended Charter is of course ridiculous nonsense, but as bearing upon the alleged entries of 1745, the remark may be made, that the Masons of Stirling who, so to speak, "swallowed a camel" in 1820 or 1822, were not likely to have strained over much "at a gnat," in 1790.

The terms *Excellent*, *Super Excellent*, and *Knight of Malta*, appear nowhere else in Masonic records, until well into the second half of the last century, and the appearance of the last title of all—*Knight of Malta*—in any records, professing to reproduce an actual entry of A.D. 1745, would be sufficient of itself to stamp such alleged "entry," and its surroundings, as apocryphal, upon my own mind.

Still, "all feet tread not in one shoe." There is no student among us who has done so much to disentangle the real history of the Royal Arch, from the confusion which has been mixed up with it, than our Bro. Hughan. To those who prefer sheltering their opinions under the authority of great names, there can therefore be no better than his own to rely upon. But I am fully persuaded that his ambition lies rather in the direction of so marshalling the evidence, that the facts may be made clear, than of arranging his proofs in such a manner as to fortify any conclusions that he may individually have arrived at.

In the *Introductory Sketch*, prefixed to the *Serious and Impartial Enquiry*, of Dr. Dassigny the rise and progress of what Laurence Dermott affirmed to be "the root, heart, and marrow of Masonry," are fully and eloquently narrated, and those readers who have benefited by its perusal will, on turning to p. 108 of the current volume of *Ars*, find a further treat in store for them, under the title of *The Ancient Stirling Lodge*, by Bro. W. J. Hughan, P.G.D.

III.

[*Freemason*, 1894.]

By a resolution of the Supreme Grand Chapter of England, duly confirmed on the 7th of February last, the portals of Royal Arch Masonry have been thrown open to all candidates for that Supreme Degree, who have served a qualifying period of four weeks in the rank or station of Master Masons.

Prior to this recent legislation, no brother could be received a member of the Royal Arch, in England, at a less interval than 12 months between the ceremonies or raising and exaltation.

For the Colonies, however, the qualifying period of service as Master Masons had been cut down from 12 months to four weeks, so far back as 1857, and the alteration was made because wherever English chapters were working side by side with Scottish or Irish ones, the great bulk of candidates for the Degree naturally acquired it in the latter, as it could be obtained in far less time than by making application to the former.

Freemasonry in the British Islands and Dependencies has made giant strides during the 19 years the Prince of Wales has been Grand Master. But the fact is a noteworthy one

that the number of chapters and companions has certainly not increased *pari passu* with that of the lodges and brethren, *i.e.*, in South Britain, and elsewhere under the English Constitution—or, to be more precise, within the Royal Arch jurisdiction, of which the G.M. of the Grand Lodge of England (if a *companion*) is *ex-officio* the First Grand Principal.

For this many reasons have been assigned, the chief one being that the appetite for new Degrees is keenest when men are young in Masonry, and that having taken a great many during their first year in the Craft, the hunger of a large proportion of brethren is so thoroughly appeased towards the end of it, as to render them quite indifferent to the attractions of any further ceremony whatever, for which they only become eligible as candidates at the expiration of 12 months' service in the grade of Master Mason.

There is much force in this contention, and the impartial student will incline to the belief that it would have been far better both for the Craft and Arch, if the bond between them had been loosened instead of tightened, at the memorable Union of the two Grand Lodges of England in 1813. According to the second Article of the Union:—

“It is declared and pronounced, that pure Ancient Masonry consists of three Degrees, and no more, *viz.*, those of the Entered Apprentice, the Fellow Craft, and the Master Mason (including the Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch).”

How, indeed, any “Order” or ceremony, *which did not exist* in the era preceding that of Grand Lodges, could be constituted a portion of “pure Ancient Masonry,” it would be bootless to inquire, though the remark may be thrown out, that if one Grand Lodge could add to the system of Ancient Masonry, so could another. Therefore, while I deprecate the action of many American Grand Lodges in following on the lines of what is familiarly known as the “Massachusetts New Departure,” nothing can really be urged against their including in the legitimate Masonic family the Knight Templars and others, providing only that the precedent established by the United Grand Lodge of England in 1813, is entitled to be regarded as a lawful exercise of its authority by that body.

Passing, however, from this point, which might detain us too long, let me proceed with the observation, that the ardour with which the Royal Arch was wooed in 1813, has finally resulted in its having been nearly stifled in the embrace of the Grand Lodge.

The Committee of General Purposes—Grand Chapter of England—has done excellent service in bringing forward and carrying to a successful issue the removal of a restriction which operated most prejudicially with respect to the diffusion and extension of the Degree. One further step is now only requisite in order that the trammels imposed by the legislation of 1813 and later years may be fully swept away, and that is the abrogation of the existing law under which actual or Past Masters of lodges are alone eligible to fill the principal chairs.

Originally, no doubt, or at least as far back as there is evidence to guide us, *viz.*, in the year 1744, when Dr. Dassigny printed his *Serious and Impartial Enquiry*, the “Masters of the Royal Arch”—by which is to be understood all members of the Degree—were “an organised body of men who had passed the chair,” *i.e.*, the chair of a lodge, which at that time, certainly in England and Scotland, was filled and vacated without a ceremony of any kind. Ultimately, indeed, the Degree of Installed or Past Master would appear—as I wrote in the *Freemason* more than 10 years ago—to have been invented by the Schismatic Grand Lodge of England (or so-called “Ancients”) to serve as a constructive passing of the chair, and thereby to qualify brethren for the Royal Arch, which could only be communicated to actual or Past Masters of lodges. In other words—the practice by the “Ancients” of conferring the Arch upon brethren not legitimately entitled to receive it, brought about a *constructive* passing through the chair, which by qualifying candidates not otherwise eligible, naturally entailed the introduction of a ceremony, *additional* to the simple forms known to Payne, Anderson, and Desaguliers.

But whatever secrets were then peculiar to Royal Arch Masonry, every candidate who was received within its pale, became acquainted with them all. The Degree was at first invariably conferred in the lodges, and it was not until comparatively late in the last century that chapters of the Order were established under the hierarchy of Principals.

For a long period the Degree of Past Master continued to be given in English chapters to all candidates for the Royal Arch, and the practice appears not to have been forbidden until 1826.

According to the *Freemasons' Quarterly Review* for 1837: “By the laws of Grand Chapter, as revised February 5th, 1823, no previous office in the *Lodge* was required as a qualification for office in the Chapter. It was only necessary that a candidate should have been a Master Mason for a year, and that then he should in a particular manner obtain,

what, until the recent alteration, was his passport to the Royal Arch. The laws of 1823 placed no further obstacle of the Craft in the way of the highest honour of the Chapter.

"Three years afterwards, viz., on March 2nd, 1826, it was resolved in the Grand Chapter: 'that no Companion should be elected to the principal chairs unless he be the actual or a Past Master of a Lodge.' This alteration of the laws was not uniformly attended to, up to 1834, as appears from a resolution of Grand Chapter on May 6th of that year, confirming and repeating the resolution of 1826."

Gleaning from earlier volumes of the same Masonic journal, I find the following: "It was resolved by the Grand Chapter—August 2nd, 1826—that no Companion can be elected to the principal chairs, but a Master or Past Master, nor into the 2nd chair until he has served the 3rd, nor into the 1st, until he has served the 3rd and 2nd." (*F. Q. Rev.*, 1834).

It is further stated, that on June 13th, 1833, the Committee of Grand Chapter "explained the alteration (recently) considered advisable.

"1st, As respected the installation of Principals in the several chairs, and

"2nd, Such alterations as were necessary on the introduction of a M.M." (*Ibid.*)

In 1835, there was formed a Committee of Promulgation, but that the new system did not work very smoothly is evidenced by the proceedings of the Grand Chapter on November 4th of that year: "The Committee reported that a 1st Principal elect had intimated his intention to work the Chapter according to the old and not according to the recently promulgated system.

"Declared, that the ceremonies recently adopted by the several Grand Chapters are the ceremonies of our Order, which it is the duty of every Chapter to obey." (*F. Q. Rev.*, 1835.)

A little later (1837) a Bro. Robt. Leigh, P.M. 327, writes: "I believe it will be found that many Companions, even since 1834 have been placed in the chairs without its ever having been suspected that they should have served as the actual Master of Lodges, *they having passed the chair and taken the Degree of Past Master in their way to the Chapter.*" (*Ibid.*, 1837.)

The Past Master's Degree continued to be conferred in Provincial and Foreign Chapters long after the practice had been put an end to in London. Indeed, so late as April 3rd, 1857, when I was myself exalted in the Melita Chapter, Valetta, then 437, now 349, the minutes record—as I learn from Bro. Broadley's *History of Freemasonry in Malta*—my "having first passed the chair of W.M."

To sum up this portion of my article—according to the Regulations of the Grand Chapter of England at the present time of writing:

I. The Grand Master of English Freemasons, the Grand Secretary, and certain other Grand Officers of the Craft (if duly qualified) are to hold corresponding positions in the Grand Chapter;

II. Every Chapter must be attached to some warranted lodge and distinguished by the same number; and,

III. Candidates for the Degree of R.A. must be Master Masons of four weeks' standing. To which may be added, that no ceremonies are worked in the chapters, but the Royal Arch itself, except the Installation of Principals, each of whom must have been previously installed in the chair of a regular lodge.

The Degree, if we may credit the eleventh volume of what was at the time—now half a century ago—the leading journal of the Craft, was planted (or replanted) with no slight difficulty on the other side of St. George's Channel. According to this publication: "In 1813, Royal Arch Masonry could scarcely have been known even by name in Ireland. For when the Earl of Donoughmore, the then Grand Master, adopted the suggestion of his illustrious colleague, the Grand Master of England, and promulgated the direction that Craft Masonry should consist of only three Degrees, including the Royal Arch, the ensuing Grand Lodge peremptorily demanded of his lordship what he meant by the innovation of adding to Masonry what was not understood to exist. A vote of censure was actually passed on the Earl of Donoughmore, who frankly said that he was innocent of any knowledge whatever of Royal Arch Masonry." (*F. Q. Review*, 1844.) This vote of censure, it may be added—on the same authority—was a commutation of the sentence originally proposed, which amounted to no less than the expulsion of the Grand Master from Masonry altogether.

The above story may or may not be entitled to our confidence. Several years ago I had some correspondence with the late Bro. S. B. Oldham, Dep. G. Sec. and Treas., Grand Lodge of Ireland, on the subject, and, so far as I recollect, while distrusting the state-

ment in the *F. Q. Review*, he was unable, nevertheless, to positively affirm it to be incorrect, owing to the minutes of the Grand Lodge for a long period of years having been lost or purloined. A new History of Irish Masonry is, however, understood to be in course of preparation, and the able Brother who has taken it in hand, Dr. F. C. Crossle, Prov. G. Sec., Down, will no doubt tell us at the proper time all that he has gleaned from official (or other) documents with regard to the rise and progress of the Royal Arch Degree.

At the present moment the G.M. and the Deputy Grand Secretary and Treasurer of the Grand Lodge of Ireland, are the King and Registrar respectively of the Grand Chapter. The centralising policy which is the leading characteristic of Irish Masonry I must pass over almost without remark. It will be sufficient to say that, besides the Arch, the Christian Degrees, the Encampments (or Preceptories), the so-called Colleges of Philosophy, and indeed every Degree or Rite which—with or without reason—is recognised by the official hierarchy as Masonic, are in close touch with the Grand Lodge.

The Presiding Officer in an Irish Chapter is styled King, which corresponds with First Principal in some other jurisdictions. The three principal officers are obligated, but the King is required to be an actual or Past Master. This, as Bro. Chetwode Crawley, S.G.D., G. Lodge of Ireland, informs me, is only of very recent introduction.

Every candidate for the Degree must be a Master Mason of six months' standing, and is required to become a Mark Master Mason by way of further preliminary. There is no ballot for the Mark, which is held to be included as an honorary Degree under the chapter warrant. The Excellent and Super-Excellent Degrees form part of the Royal Arch, and thereby differ from the Mark, which is usually taken a month or so before exaltation.

The Royal Arch in Scotland is worked under the direction of a Grand Chapter, established in 1818, which has always been entirely independent of the Grand Lodge.

Assuming the plea of emergency to be accepted, as it generally is, there is nothing to prevent a Scottish brother from being raised at one *sederunt* (or meeting), and exalted a few minutes afterwards. The only requirement of the chapter being, that the candidate should be a Master Mason, and whether his standing as such can be measured by years or moments is wholly immaterial. If he has already received the "Mark" in *lodge*, the chapter merely "affiliates" him, otherwise it confers that Degree, sitting as a Mark lodge. Next, the chapter sits as an "Excellent Master's" lodge (working a further ceremony), and finally as a Royal Arch chapter.

Formerly there were three preliminary Degrees—Mark, Past, and Excellent—but that of (constructive) Past Master has now for some years been discontinued.

Separate chair secrets are imparted to the three Principals at their installation, and generally in a severely concise form, each ceremony lasting for a few minutes only. A companion can be elected to the First Chair without having previously filled the others, and on such occasions the secrets pertaining to all three are communicated to him. The Principals are not required to have sat as actual Masters of lodges.

Besides the Supreme Grand Chapter erected (as above stated) in 1818, there is another organisation which claims the right of controlling the Royal Arch Degree in Scotland. This is the *Early Grand Scottish Rite*, formerly called the *Early Grand Mother Encampment of High Knight Templars, Scotland*.

The laws of the rite are entitled the "General Statutes and Ordinances enacted for the government of Red, Black, Green, and White Masonry" [in Scotland].

Prefixed to these laws or "statutes" is an "Historical Sketch" (1893), from which I shall next quote, premising, however, that I do not in any way vouch for the accuracy of the statements presented, and merely cite them (in an abridged form) as resting entirely on the good faith and credibility of the compiler.

According to this "Historical Sketch"—during the latter part of the 18th century a variety of Degrees—Red, Black, Green and White—were worked in the lodges. But in the year 1800 the Grand Lodge of Scotland passed a resolution forbidding the practice, and limiting the control of the lodges to the first Three Degrees. Whereupon the votaries of the "high grades" applied to their fratres in Ireland, who had an established Grand Encampment, for charters, and soon between 40 and 50 encampments were at work in Scotland, under warrants issued by the "Early Grand Encampment of Ireland." In 1811-12, however, Alexander Deuchar, of Edinburgh Encampment, No. 31 (Irish "Early Grand" Jurisdiction), established a schismatic body, which he styled the "Supreme Grand Conclave of Scotland." This conclave continued to work the Red and Black under one head, as had been customary under the Irish "Early Grand." Hence arose a further

division, and in 1818, the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter sprang into existence as the spawn of a schism—being in fact the illegitimate grand-daughter of the Irish Grand Encampment. The “Deuchar” Grand Conclave may here be permitted to drop out of the narrative.

On the 22nd June, 1822, Frater Robert Martin, of No. 33 Encampment, presented a petition from Nos. 28 (Muir Kirk), 39 (Ayr), and 40 and 42 (Kilmarnock), to the “Early Grand” of Ireland, praying that the Scottish Encampments might be erected into a Sovereign jurisdiction. The request was granted, and Fra. Martin appointed Provisional Grand Master—a nomination which was ratified at a representative meeting of the Scottish Encampments in July, 1822. This brother retained the office until 1857, and has had 12 successors, from one of whom, Bro. Matthew McB. Thomson, of Ayr (1877-81), I have derived all the information I possess with regard to the history of the *Early Grand Scottish Rite*, and which I relate on his authority and on that of books and documents he has been so obliging as to send for my perusal.

Subsequently to 1822 a schism befell the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter at Edinburgh (erected 1818) in the form of a Glasgow off-shoot, best known as “Donald Campbell’s General Grand Chapter.” The new Grand Chapter sought a union with the Grand Encampment (of Scotland), but the negotiations fell through owing to irreconcilable differences in working. The fate of the Glasgow Grand Chapter is not disclosed by any papers before me, but it must have long since died out, or ceased to exist as an independent body.

The first event of real importance in more modern times was a resolution of the Grand Encampment in 1880, “delimitating the powers of Grand Encampment and the Grand Council of Rites, enumerating the Degrees to be controlled by each, and handing over the control of Red Masonry to the ‘Early Grand Mother Chapter,’—the three bodies working in harmony with each other and having many ties in common.”

In 1891 a committee was nominated by the Supreme Grand Chapter at Edinburgh (erected 1818) to confer with one from the “Early Grand,” and to endeavour to arrange a union between the two bodies. This came to nothing, and a second conference took place at the Central Hotel, Glasgow, on February 15th, 1893, with apparently no happier result, though the negotiations are seemingly not yet exhausted, as in the “Historical Sketch” before me, “It is hoped, for the sake of Masonic unity, the strayed sheep [meaning the Supreme Grand R.A. Chapter of Scotland] may be brought back to the Early Grand fold.”

The 3rd of the Statutes and Ordinances of the *Early Grand Mother Chapter* is as follows: “The Early Grand Mother Chapter recognises the Degrees of Funeral Master, Fellow Craft Mark, Master’s Mark, Architect, Grand Architect, Master of the Blue, Past Master, Royal Ark Mariner, Fugitive Mark, Link and Chain, Jacob’s Wrestle, Scarlet Cord, Brotherly Love, Royal Master, Select Master, Most Excellent Master, Excellent Mason, Super-excellent Mason, Holy Royal Arch, and the installed degrees of Noah, J., H., and Z.”

The *Grand Encampment* in its 5th Statute, “Recognises and controls the Degrees of Knight of the Red Cross of Rome and Constantine, Knight of St. John the Evangelist, K.H.S., Knight of the Christian Mark, Knight of the Holy and Illustrious Order of the Cross, Pilgrim, Knight Templar, Mediterranean Pass or Knight of St. Paul, and Knight of Malta.”

The 7th Statute of the *Scottish Grand Council of Rites* runs: “The degrees of Green and White Masonry as recognised by the S.G.C. of Rites are: The Green, Prince of Babylon, Prince Mason, Knight of the Black Cross, Knight of Bethany, Knight of the White Cross, Knight of Patmos, Knight of Death, Knight of the Rosy Cross, Knight of the Black and White Eagle, the White, Priestly Order of the Temple or White Mason, Priest of the Sun, Priest of Eleusis, Mother Word or Royal Secret.”

The number of Degrees worked under the “Early Grand Scottish Rite” is as follows: Chapter Series, 4th to 22nd; Encampment ditto, 23rd to 31st; Green and White ditto, 32nd to 44th; total, 41.

To obviate any possible misunderstanding, let me here state, before concluding my remarks on Scottish Capitular Masonry, that the Supreme Grand R.A. Chapter (1818) is, so far at least as I am aware, the *only* governing body of the degree which is recognised as such (or in any way whatsoever) by the Grand Chapters of other jurisdictions. But the existence of the “Early Grand,” which *claims* the right of controlling the Royal Arch in Scotland, is nevertheless a *fact* that cannot be got rid of by ignoring it.

XV.

NOTES ON HISTORICAL FREEMASONRY

[*Northern Freemason*, 1906.]



Photo by Donald Macbeth.

[London.]

EARLY BUILDING OPERATIONS.

(From a 15th Century MS.—No. 19720—in the British Museum.)

NOTES ON HISTORICAL FREEMASONRY.

[*Northern Freemason*, 1906.]

I.—THE LOCKE MANUSCRIPT.

“*Are maçonnes gudder menne then odhers?*”—LOCKE MS.

In the course of a long Masonic life I have witnessed the appearance of many new journals of the Craft. Some come to stay—at least for a time—while others as rapidly disappear; but in their earliest stage there is nearly always one feature which is common to them all, and it is this which renders their columns so attractive to the intelligent student of our antiquities, whose wish would be to raise to a still higher level both the tone and the intellectual status of the Society.

The characteristic to which I allude, as that by which new journals of the Craft are ordinarily distinguished, consists of their inclining more in the direction of the “Magazine,” than of the mere “Newspaper,” or, in other words, greater space is devoted to articles which are fruitful of thought, than to reports of meetings, which are alone interesting to the extent that we have either a real or a passing acquaintance with any persons who may have been present at them.

Conspicuous among the Masonic Journals of recent foundation are the “*New Age*” of the United States, and the “*Northern Freemason*” of our own country—whose readers I am now addressing. Each of these publications has become a powerful organ of Freemasonry—on its intellectual side, and in its selection of a subject for treatment in the pages of the *Northern Freemason*, I gladly acknowledge my indebtedness to Mr. G. F. Moore, Editor of the *New Age*, by whom (among other valuable contributions to Masonic literature) a topic of great interest and singular complexity has lately been disinterred, rejuvenated, and again brought to the light of day.

The curious point which has been examined with such ability and critical acumen by Mr. Moore in the issue of the *New Age* for October, 1904, is the genuineness, or the reverse, of what is commonly described as an Old Manuscript, although of its actual existence in any other than a printed form, there is not a trace. This will be most easily described as the “Locke”—though it has been variously styled the “Leland” and the “Locke-Leland”—MS.

The document contains (according to the title),—“CERTAYNE QUESTONS wyth AWNSWERS to the same, concernynge the Mystery of MACONRYE.”

“Wryttenne by the Hande of Kinge HENRYE the Sixthe of the Name and faythfullye copied by me Johan Leylande, Antiquarius, by the Commaunde of his Highnesse.”

The catechism (so far as there is evidence to direct us) first appeared in the volume of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, for 1753, and in the *Public Advertiser* of October 19th, in the same year, and purports to be a reprint of a pamphlet published at Frankfort in 1748. The “Manuscript” is accompanied by an alleged letter from the celebrated philosopher, JOHN LOCKE.

The first of the series of “Questions” is “What mote ytt be?”

Another, is the form of words which is shewn as a motto at the head of the present article—and the reason why it has been so placed will be given in the few remarks with which I shall take leave of the reader:—

“The way of wynnyng the facultye of Abrac,” is among the curious phrases that are to be found in the catechism, and there are some other singular expressions which I shall next cite, though not with a rigid adherence to the Socratic method of the dialogue, but by extracting from one of HORACE WALPOLE'S interesting letters to SIR HORACE MANN (1772): “I have been reading the most delightful book in the world, the Lives of LELAND, TOM HEARNE, and ANTHONY WOOD. In the story of LELAND is an examination of a Freemason, written by the hand of KING HENRY with notes by MR. LOCKE. Freemasonry, KING HENRY VI., and LOCKE, make a strange heterogeneous olio; but that is not all. The respondent, who defends the mystery of Masonry, says it was brought into Europe by the Venetians—he means the Phœnicians—and who do you think propagated it? Why, one PETER GORE

—And who do you think that was ? One PYTHAGORAS, PYTHAGORE—I do not know whether it is not still more extraordinary, that this and the rest of the nonsense in that account made MR. LOCKE determine to be a Freemason ; so would I too, if I could expect to hear of more PETER GORES.”

The catechism—of which many translations appeared in foreign languages—was freely reprinted by English Masonic writers of the eighteenth century, including LAURENCE DERMOTT (in his *Ahiman Rezon*). WILLIAM PRESTON (in his *Illustrations*), and JOHN NOORTHOUCK (in his edition—1784—of the *Constitutions*),

The authenticity of the *Manuscript* was, however, seriously questioned by the MARQUIS CHEF DE BIEN, in 1787, and by THORY, another French writer, at a later period. Among the German opponents of the document may be named LESSING, KELLER, and FINDEL.

On the other hand, it has numbered among its supporters some of the most prominent literary Masons of England, Germany and France, of whom may be named KRAUSE, FESSLER, LENNING, REGHELLINI, PRESTON, HUTCHINSON, CALCOTT, and OLIVER.

The following arguments against its authenticity were advanced by J. O. HALLIWELL, F.R.S., a learned antiquary, and—like HORACE WALPOLE—a non-Mason :—“ It is singular that the circumstances attending its publication should have led no one to suspect its authenticity. I was at the pains of making a long search in the Bodleian Library last summer [1843], in the hopes of finding the original, but without success. In fact, there can be but little doubt that celebrated and well-known document is a forgery !

In the first place, why should such a document have been printed abroad ? Was it likely that it should have found its way to Frankfort, nearly half a century afterwards, and been published without any explanation of the source whence it was obtained ? Again, the orthography is most grotesque, and too gross to have been penned either by HENRY VI. or LELAND, or both combined. For instance, we have PETER GOWER, a Grecian, explained in a note by the fabricator—for who else could have solved it ?—to be PYTHAGORAS ! As a whole, it is but a clumsy attempt at deception, and is quite a parallel to the recently-discovered one of the “ *first Englishe Mercurie*.” The remarks of MR. J. O. HALLIWELL carried great weight, and may be said to have practically settled the question for a time, as some thirty years later (1874), we find that DR. ALBERT G. MACKAY, after reviewing all the authorities, observes :—“ If my own opinion is worth giving on this subject, I should say with much reluctance and against my own wishes, that there is neither internal nor external evidence of the authenticity of this document to make it a sufficient foundation for historical evidence. (*Encyclopædia of F.*)

Shortly afterwards (1875), in his fascinating work, *The Early History and Antiquities of Freemasonry*, MR. G. F. FORT writes :—“ In the year 1748, a small pamphlet is said to have been published at Frankfort, in Germany, which it is alleged, was written by the hand of Henry VI. of England, purporting to be the record of an official investigation into the principles of Freemasonry held by that monarch, or under his direction. . . . A careful examination of the pamphlet, republished by KRAUSE, convinces me that it is genuine and entitled to full credence. Who the author was is uncertain, but it presents all the appearance, from the phraseology and antique orthography at least, of having been written as early as the middle of the fifteenth century. *The traditions of the fraternity are also as accurately transmitted by this manuscript as by those which Masonic historians have accepted to be genuine.* . . . whoever wrote the document in question was profoundly learned in the secrets possessed by the Craft.”

With the passing remark that the italics last given are my own, and that the penultimate sentence in the foregoing extract will be referred to again, I shall next turn to the opinion of the late REV. A. F. A. WOODFORD, as expressed in 1878 :—“ While we give up the actual claim of the document to be a MS. of the time of KING HENRY VI., or to have been written by him or copied by LELAND, we think that it is not unlikely that we have in it the remains of a Lodge catechism conjoined with an hermetic one.” (*Kenning's Mas. Cycl.*).

WOODFORD was deeply imbued with the idea, that in the form which it ultimately assumed, Freemasonry had received a distinct tinge at the hands of its foster parents, the Hermetical (or Alchemistical) Philosophers. This view was shared by ALBERT PIKE, who, in a letter to myself—dated July 22nd, 1889,—observes :—“ I think that there is real and great significance in the old account of the introduction of Masonry into England by PETER GOWER, of Groton. It connects Masonry in a way not at all uncommon, with the doctrines of PYTHAGORAS and Hermes ; and the fact that there is no mention of any association or organisation in England of Hermeticists and Alchemists is not without value, especially as there was an Astrological Society, whose annual dinner ASIIMOLE attended.”

Among the "Remarkable Occurrences in Masonry,"—to adopt a phrase which has now become classical among our Fraternity, has been the recent appearance as a literary organ of the "Ancient and Accepted Rite," (in the U.S.A.) of the "New Age." It was founded by the HON. JAMES D. RICHARDSON, a worthy successor of the late ALBERT PIKE in the office of Grand Commander of the Mother Supreme Council of the World.

The first number of this journal—which in its short career has already lifted the study of Freemasonry into a distinctly higher plane—was published in June, 1904, and in the third number, issued in October of the same year, there appeared some critical remarks on the "Locke" (or "Leland") Manuscript which deeply impressed me when I first perused them, and impelled me to congratulate the writer, not only on the force and lucidity of his style, but also on the modest and unassuming manner in which, while seeking—and it must be freely admitted not without a considerable measure of success—to rehabilitate the Locke MS. in contemporary judgment, he nevertheless deals very tenderly and gently with those of us—still living—who have preceded him in the same inquiry, and whom he considers to have arrived at conclusions which are not warranted by the evidence that has been adduced. *Ex. Gr.*,—"GOULD, in his 'Concise History, says that it (the MS.) was at one time generally accepted as an authentic document of the Craft. But this view is not shared by modern writers, who regard it as a palpable fraud and wholly unworthy of the critical acumen which has been lavished on its contents."

"We are not in possession," remarks MR. G. F. MOORE, Editor of the *New Age*, and the writer of the article on the Locke MS., "of any new facts which would justify a reversal of this judgement, but the data on which the original sentence of condemnation was based seems wholly inadequate. Many of the arguments are trivial and puerile in the extreme, and some of them the result of prejudice against the High Degrees."

After fully reviewing the authorities, and in concluding his argument, MR. MOORE states—"This is the day when even our sacred books are made the target of destructive criticisms. It is a 'fad,' and while we cannot say the 'Leland' Manuscript is genuine, we do say that most arguments against it are puerile, trivial, merely negative, or perhaps the result of prejudice."

The Editor of the *New Age* has, in my opinion, presented some very cogent reasons for a re-hearing of the case, but further than this I cannot go at the present time of writing, for—*pace* MR. MOORE—the question is one of singular complexity, and we should only err in the opposite direction were we to under-rate in 1906, the strength of testimony, which thirty years ago was over-rated and deemed conclusive in respect of the matter to which it relates.

That the question, however, of the authenticity—or perhaps the better word would be the genuineness—of the document under examination requires a fresh hearing, or in other words to be newly-argued, has, I think, been made perfectly clear, but there are certain considerations that occur to my own mind as strengthening the appeal for a further inquiry, with regard to the validity or otherwise of what has been put forward as an historical document, and these I shall proceed to adduce; premising, however, that my efforts will be limited to the contention, that a new trial is called for by the evidence, and that in endeavouring to make the case of the appellants more intelligible, I sincerely hope that the result of my labours will not be to render it more obscure.

I shall begin by saying that neither HORACE WALPOLE nor J. O. HALLIWELL was a Freemason. The influence of the former on the reception of the MS. as an historical document has probably amounted to *nil*—that is, in the past, but his famous "Letters" have now become English classics, and a note of warning is therefore required to point out that among the vast stock of learning possessed by HORACE WALPOLE there was not even a glimmer of knowledge with respect to either the history or antiquities of the Royal Art. With HALLIWELL the case was somewhat different. He was not only a justly-renowned antiquary, but also took high—and perhaps higher—rank as an archaeologist. But to put into the smallest compass the judgment I wish to pass upon these two men, with regard to the value of their criticism on the "Locke" MS., let me next observe that to the best of my knowledge and belief, with perhaps the solitary exception of the late WYATT PAPWORTH, there has never been, at any time, an outside critic of Freemasonry, whose remarks are worth the paper on which they were inscribed.

It is known to students of the Craft—though, alas! they seem to flourish in inverse proportion to the number of associations that are avowedly established for the promotion of Masonic research—that the ancient method of Masonic instruction was (in the main) by way of Question and Answer, or in other words, catechetical.

It is true, indeed, as we find laid down by DR. JAMES ANDERSON—the first historian of the first Grand Lodge—that “the *Free-Masons* had always a *Book* in *Manuscript* call'd the *Book of Constitutions* (of which they have several very Antient Copies remaining), containing not only their Charges and *Regulations*, but also the History of *Architecture* from the Beginning of Time; in order to show the Antiquity and Excellency of the *Craft or Art*.” (*Constit.* 1738, *Introd.*).

But of these “Manuscript Constitutions”—of which, like the Masonic Catechisms, there is a great variety and profusion—a considerable number have only come down to us in a printed form. Of this a typical illustration is afforded by the “Dowland MS.”—containing a text (or reading) of much value and importance—which, as in the case of the “Locke” Catechism or (“Manuscript”), was made known to the world, as being a reproduction of an *existing*, though for all practical purposes, an *invisible* original, in the pages of the *Gentleman's Magazine*. (1815.)

The manner in which the “Catechisms” have become public property presents little if any variety, and it is with regard to this point that I shall ask the reader to take a backward glance at the passage I have extracted from the writings of Mr. G. F. FORT.

So-called “Masonic Catechisms” were published in the *Flying Post*, 1723, the *Daily Journal*, 1730, the *Westminster Journal*, 1742, the *Scots Magazine*, 1755, and not only could the list be extended, but the number of times several of these pieces were copied and re-copied by other journals was very great. Many other “Catechisms,” also professedly copied from “Manuscripts found among the papers of deceased Freemasons,” also made their known appearance in booklet form and it was of these that LAURENCE DERMOTT, Grand Secretary of the Schismatical Grand Lodge of England (or “Ancients”) in the second edition of his “*Ahiman Rezon*” (1764)—the same, by the way, in which he reprinted for the benefit of his readers the “Locke” MS.—states:—“Several pamphlets (on Masonry) have been published since the first edition of this book [1756], viz. :—*Masonry Dissected*, *The Master Key to Masonry*, *The Three Distinct Knocks*, *Boaz and Jachin*, etc. If any person or persons have gained either knowledge or admittance into Lodges by virtue of these publications he or they ought to publish it, for the good of mankind, as well as for the honour of the ingenious authors.”

The foregoing remarks will be generally concurred in by all those who have made a study of Freemasonry, but the question before us is not so much the evidential value of the “Catechisms” considered as historical documents—a point, it may be observed, on which the more learned the commentators, the less would be the probability of any two of them being able to agree—but their genuineness as literary pieces, *alleged* to be Masonic, and which (in certain instances) have been copied and re-copied by illiterate transcribers until many words and passages have become hopelessly obscure.

This has equally been the case with both classes of documents, the “Constitutions” and the “Catechisms.” And in both instances the obscurity of language caused by frequent transcription, while showing to demonstration that the reading or text has been corrupted by age, at the same time justifies the inference being drawn, that the “Manuscript” of origin must have been extensively *used* during the successive stages of its gradual descent from the written to the printed literature of the Craft.

As will be seen, to the argument of anonymity which has been advanced by opponents of the “Locke” MS., I attach no weight at all; and I shall now turn to that legendary patron of our Society, KING HENRY VI., whose alleged connection with the Freemasons in a traditionary or any other way, was long disputed, and therefore served to accentuate, as it were, the displeasure of these critics by whom the claim advanced on behalf of that monarch, (in the “Locke” MS.) to figure as a Protector of the Craft, was rejected with contumely.

The discovery, however, of that particular type of the “Manuscript Constitutions,” of which the “William Watson MS.” is a leading exemplar, has resulted in the full restoration of KING HENRY VI. to the position of a legendary Masonic dignitary, and one of the most learned Craftsmen of our own time—from whom I never venture to differ save with humility—DR. W. BEGEMANN, of Berlin, is firmly convinced that certain Charges and Regulations of the Masons were actually sanctioned and approved by “KING HENRY VI. the Sixthe of the Name.”

I have briefly summed up the reasons which are conclusive to my mind with regard to the necessity that exists for a re-hearing of the evidence in the case of the “Locke” MS. Beyond this I shall not attempt to proceed in the present article. But it goes without saying (to borrow from the French method of speech) that *if* the MS. can be proved, or

even reasonably assumed to be a genuine one, then the words of FORT, WOODFORD, ALBERT PIKE, and G. F. MOORE, with respect to the value of its text, are calculated to deeply impress the minds of all serious and unprejudiced students of the Craft.

A fitting sequel to the sagacious policy adopted by the first Editor of *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum*—the late GEORGE WILLIAM SPETH—but which for some unknown reason was discontinued after his decease, in reproducing (by means of the printer's art) rare copies of the "Manuscript Constitutions," would be a similar reproduction, not only of scarce versions of the old Masonic "Catechisms" but of the entire body of these documents so far as any traces of them are known to exist.

In taking leave of the reader, I shall briefly explain why the motto which is placed at the head of this article caught my fancy, as illustrating the difference between the Masonry of Ancient and Modern times. Let me, however, by way of preliminary, cite the two last queries and responses which are given in the "Locke" MS. :—

Quest. Are maçonnes gudder menne then odhers ?

Answ. Some maçonnes are not so vertuous as some odher menne ; but, yn the moste parte, they be more gude then they would be yf they war not maconnes.

Quest. Doth maçonnes love eidher odher myghtyly as beeth sayde ?

Answ. Yea verylyche, and yt may not odherwise be : for gude menne, and true, kennynge eihder odher to be soche, doeth always love the more as thay be more gude.

On the completion of my original *History of Freemasonry* (1887), it was promptly pirated in America, where, however, owing to the enactment of an International Copyright Law in 1891, I was able to guard myself from a similar act of brigandage, on the publication of my *Concise History of Freemasonry* in 1904. Baffled, but not discouraged, the piratical firm of 1887, then proceeded to notify in the *Keystone* (Philadelphia)—June 17th, 1905.—“ Nearly Ready, new Revised Unabridged American Edition of Robert Freke Gould's Complete History of Freemasonry. . . . Its Board of Editors are all recognised authorities throughout the world.”

The names of the persons whose Masonic obligations sit so lightly upon them as to permit of their becoming members of this "Board" have not yet been revealed, but I took the earliest opportunity in my power of protesting against any of their handiwork being considered as forming part of a "Complete History of Freemasonry," either written or in the slightest degree inspired by myself.

This I have done by writing to the various American Grand Lodges, just prior to the dates of their Annual Meetings, and soliciting the favour of their notifying the Lodges that the *only American Edition* of my "History of Freemasonry," authorised by myself, is my *Concise History*, published by the MACOY Co. of John Street, New York. The result, it is, of this application which has riveted my attention, for the moment, on the foregoing extracts from the "Locke" MS. With a very few exceptions, though the empty compliments they bestow on the value of my "History" are lavish in the extreme, any desire to help me, on the part of the leading lights of the American Craft, by assisting in protecting from outrage the fruits of my labour, does not exist. Moreover, the prime mover of the piracy in advertising a "Revised" edition of the book reprinted by him without my permission, in 1887, unblushingly appends the magical emblems "32°" to his name, thereby proclaiming his membership of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite—a body which it was the fond hope of ALBERT PIKE should justify by their actions, the title of being "gudder menne then odhers," but whose toleration to-day of the curious practices of one of their members (to whom I have referred), would, I am sure, were he still among us—be as disquieting to that great man as it is inexplicable to the writer of the present article.

II.—OUR SYMBOLICAL TRADITIONS.

“ Cicero,—*But men may construe things, after their fashion,
Clean from the purpose of the things themselves.*”—

Julius Cæsar, A. 2, Sc. iii.

In my previous article—the first of the series with which I am proceeding in the columns of this journal—the Catechisms and the Constitutions of the Freemasons were instanced as throwing a strong side-light on the early usages and the lost learning of the Society. But a more comprehensive definition of the sources of information which are yet open to those in quest of Masonic knowledge, may be summed up in the recommendation,

that they should diligently search for, and when found carefully examine, the Oral, the Written, and the Symbolical traditions of our Sodality. The manner in which this attempt should be made, or, to be more precise, let me say the first and most important step to be taken in the inquiry, I shall endeavour to indicate in the present paper.

I shall begin by asking the reader to allow himself to be personally conducted over a period of Masonic history, which, if rightly understood, will afford a good insight into the usages of the Fraternity, as prevailing immediately before and immediately after that great event which ushered in what has been appropriately termed the Era of Grand Lodges. The historical space we are about to traverse has been termed the Epoch of Transition, and may be said to extend from the formation of the earliest of Grand Lodges in 1717, down to the publication of its second "Book of Constitutions" by that body in 1738. The annals of these 21 years have come down to us very imperfectly recorded, and over a great portion of them, more especially the chronicle of the first seven years, there is a heavy cloud of darkness and uncertainty. Still, judging by such light as we possess, and there are not wanting beacons that will aid in keeping us in the right path, certain leading events stand out, as it were, in relief, and on these a passing glance is essential, in order that a due comprehension of my general argument may be ensured.

Although the Grand Lodge of England was established in 1717, it excited very little notice until the DUKE OF MONTAGU became "the first Noble Grand Master" in 1721.

At a Grand Lodge held in September of that year, "His Grace's *Worship* and the *Lodge* finding fault with all the Copies of the *Old Gothic* [*i.e.*, Manuscript] *Constitutions*, ordered BRO. JAMES ANDERSON, A.M., to digest the same, in a new and better method." This mandate was duly carried out, and the compilation, bearing the title of the *Constitutions of the Freemasons*, was published with the printed approbation of the Grand Lodge and the private lodges (under its obedience) in 1723.

There was a great uproar. An alarming decrease in the number of subordinate lodges took place. Both from within and without the pale of the Society the Freemasons were openly derided and held up to ridicule. Ultimately a scapegoat was found in the person of the unlucky Author of the *Book of Constitutions*, and the REV. JAMES ANDERSON (afterwards D.D.) either *proprio motu* or under moral compulsion, retired from active Masonic life in 1724, nor did he again attend a meeting of the Grand Lodge until the summer of 1731.

ANDERSON, who has been styled "The Father of Masonic History," brought out in 1738, under the title of *The New Book of Constitutions*, a revised and greatly amplified edition of his previous work of 1723, and the two books have been generally accepted, not only as the basis of Masonic history, but also of Masonic law. Yet, if this view be conceded, what follows? According to the earlier edition (1723), there were two degrees; according to the later one (1738) there were three. Moreover, in various other ways, and notably in the CHARGE, "Concerning God and Religion," they exhibit discrepancies which are totally irreconcilable. If you pin your faith on one book, you must throw over the other, for to believe both is an impossibility.

But as the only possible way to solve a complex problem is to take it to pieces, that is what I shall attempt to do with the leading and somewhat baffling intricacies of the Epoch of Transition. The first *Book of Constitutions* (1723) introduces three striking innovations. It abolishes Christianity as the religion of Masonry; it forbids the working of the "Master's part" in private lodges; and it arbitrarily imposes on the English Craft the use of two compound words—Entered-Apprentice and Fellow-Craft—which had no previous existence in its terminology.

The profession of faith which should be required of every candidate for initiation is a question which is being debated with much intensity at the present moment by our Continental and American brethren, but the theological tenets comprised in the *Original Plan of Freemasonry* fall within the scope of our "Written," and not of our "Symbolical Traditions"—the examination of which will absorb whatever is left of the space that has been placed at my disposal for the article of this month.

In the 13th of the GENERAL REGULATIONS (O. R. XIII.), which were first printed in ANDERSON'S *Constitutions* of 1723, there appears:—"Apprentices must be admitted *Masters* and *Fellow-Craft* only here [*i.e.*, in the Grand Lodge], unless by a dispensation."

This law, it may be observed, was swept away by a resolution of the Grand Lodge, on November 27th, 1725, and its repeal is chiefly noteworthy (in the argument I am pursuing) as affording corroborative and conclusive evidence with respect to the *number* of degrees that are actually referred to in O. R. (OLD REGULATION) XIII.

In the terms used by ANDERSON there was a *latent ambiguity*, which caused his words to be wrongly understood, and their true meaning was not re-discovered until 1885.

Apprentices, therefore, as the accredited mouthpiece of the Grand Lodge was long supposed to have said (in 1723), could only receive the degrees of Fellow-Craft and of Master in the Grand Lodge. Whereas, in the contemplation of DR. ANDERSON, there was only *one* degree (and not two) superior to that of Apprentice, namely, that of Fellow-Craft or Master—words, which in the Scottish idiom signified one and the same thing. But the erroneous impression prevailed, and perhaps there is nothing more remarkable in the whole history of Freemasonry, than the curious circumstance that within the short period of 15 years a popular delusion was transformed into an unvarnished truth. Apprentice, and Fellow-Craft or Master, are described as the degrees then existing in the "Constitutions" of 1723; while Apprentice, Fellow-Craft and Master are given in the "Constitutions" of 1738.

In Scotland, both before and long after the year 1723, the expressions "Fellow-Craft" and "Master" were terms of indifferent application, meaning one and the same thing. But in England the compound word "Fellow-Craft" was unknown, until its introduction by Anderson in 1723 (O. R. XIII.) from the operative vocabulary of the North.

The combined use, therefore, of the terms Apprentice, Fellow-Craft, and Master in the XIIIth of the "General Regulations" (1723) gave rise to the singular hallucination that they denoted three distinct and separate degrees which were then recognised by the Grand Lodge.

A brief recapitulation of certain leading facts may, at this point, be acceptable to the reader. In 1723, and presumably at a far earlier date, there were two *steps*, or, as we should now say, *degrees* of Masonry. One, the Apprentice part; the other the Master's part. The former comprising the degrees of E.A. and F.C.; and the latter that of M.M.—as we now have them. Moreover, the *now* familiar titles of Entered Apprentice and Fellow-Craft are operative terms which were peculiar to Scottish, and unheard of in English Masonry, until their appearance in the printed "Constitutions" of 1723.

The earliest reference to three distinct steps (or degrees) of Masonry will be found in the minutes of the *Philo-Musicæ et Architecturæ Societas*, London, under the date of May 12th, 1725; and the second in the "Speech" delivered by DR. FRANCIS DRAKE (the famous author of *Eboracum*) at York, on St. John's Day, (in winter), 1726. A little later—in 1730—one SAMUEL PRICHARD published a spurious ritual of three degrees, under the title of *Masonry Dissected*; and a similar number are indicated by JOHN PENNELL in his *Irish* "Constitutions" of the same year. After this the delusion assumed such proportions that, yielding to popular clamour, the two degrees inherited and hitherto only recognised by the Grand Lodge of England were, by the bisection of the Apprentice part, declared not only to be, *but to have been*, THREE.

Among the attractions of historic study there is the possibility of wresting from some limited series of events the secret of their cause and effect. The plan I have proposed to myself in the present paper, is to lead the reader over a particular period of Masonic history, with the hope and expectation not alone that he will obtain an insight into the early proceedings of the Grand Lodge Era, but that the information so derived will give him a fuller, clearer, and more serviceable glance at Freemasonry as a whole, than would be afforded by an equally restricted survey of any other "limited series of events" to be found in the entire annals of our Fraternity.

After 1730, constant allusions by British and Continental writers are met with, referring to Scots (or Scottish) Lodges, Scots Masters, and Scots Degrees, all of which may have derived at least a portion of their origin from a still increasing delusion with respect to O. R. XIII. In the General Regulations of 1723, besides introducing a new or additional degree, the *Scottish* Author of the *English* "Constitutions" was also supposed to have hinted—not obscurely—at the existence of a more elaborate system of Masonry than prevailed elsewhere, in the country of his birth.

The second "Book of Constitutions" was printed in 1738, and as most works of reference are consulted in their latest form, it at once superseded and took the place of the first edition, published in 1723.

A new generation of Masons sprang up. The contemporaries of PAYNE, ANDERSON, and DESAGULIERS passed off the scene, and then came the Great Schism,—when for more than half a century two Grand Lodges, each denouncing the other as irregular, distracted the allegiance of the English Craft.

The market (for such commodities) was glutted with spurious rituals, and by certain of these publications it was declared that the sequence of the *three* degrees having been altered by the original Grand Lodge of England in 1730, the edict had been conformed to by a majority of the Lodges, but that a more scrupulous minority—adhering to the ancient customs—had seceded from the general body, and set up a Grand Lodge of their own.

This curious story had, of course, its origin in the delusion that *three* degrees were unequivocally referred to in the "Constitutions" of 1723. Whereas, if three degrees *were* worked at all during the third decade of the eighteenth century, the practice took place not only without the sanction, but in direct violation of the usage prescribed by the Grand Lodge. How, therefore, the governing Masonic body could have changed the relative priority of the first two degrees, which as separate entities, were unknown to it,—or, on what grounds it could have expected the Lodges to obey its commands (if, for the sake of argument, the possibility of three degrees having been worked, though not authorized, be conceded) *after* 1730, considering that they had done so *before* that year, it would be idle to enquire.

The point, however, must be pressed home, that the delusion of 1723, with all its subsequent accretions of error, was accepted and propagated by every historian of the Craft down to quite recent times. DERMOTT, PRESTON, KLOSS, OLIVER, FINDEL, and MACKAY all figure in the list.

Many volumes of enthusiastic rubbish, and a few—a very few—essays of considerable though transitory interest have been written on what can, at most, be only described as the conjectural history of Masonry before the Era of Grand Lodges.

But the disbelievers in the existence of a tri-gradal system of degrees at that early period, had (prior to 1885), to deal with the *supposed fact*—which was more or less disastrous to their theories—that three degrees, as we now have them, are plainly indicated in the "Constitutions" of 1723.

The accumulation of possibilities was an easy task, but a difficulty which proved insurmountable, was to make out a particular case in such a way that it would stand vigorous criticism.

The real meaning, however, of OLD REGULATION XIII. having now been re-discovered, it will at least become a legitimate inference, or reasonable deduction from the evidence, that the two degrees of 1723 had been in existence for a longer period than six years; or, to vary the expression, that these steps of Masonry were known to the Lodges and Craftsmen, at whose bidding the earliest of Grand Lodges assumed the reins of power and authority in 1717.

III.—OUR WRITTEN TRADITIONS.

*"Pray we now to God almyght,
And to Hys moder Mary bryght."*—REGIUS MS.

In December, 1877, in consequence of the removal by the Grand Orient of France from its "Book of Constitutions" of the paragraphs affirming the existence of a "Great Architect of the Universe," the Grand Lodge of England appointed a special Committee, composed of the following members to consider the proper course to be pursued:—The EARL OF CARNARVON, Pro. Grand Master; LORD SKELMERSDALE (afterwards EARL OF LATHOM), Deputy G.M.; LORD LEIGH, Prov. G.M., Warwickshire; JOHN HAYES, LORD TENTERDEN, and the EARL OF DONOUGHMORE, Past Grand Wardens; the REV. C. J. MARTYN, P.G., Chaplain; ÆNEAS J. MACINTYRE, Grand Registrar; JOHN B. MONCKTON, President, and H. C. LEVANDER, Vice-President, Board of General Purposes; and ROBERT F. GOULD, P.M., Moira Lodge, No. 92.

Two months later, the Committee, in their report, declared the "alteration to be, in their judgment, opposed to the traditions, practice, and feelings of all true and genuine Masons from the earliest to the present time." Similar action was taken in other jurisdictions, and wherever the English language is spoken, the Grand Orient of France has long been regarded as having parted with all claim to be looked upon as a Masonic body.

Recently, however, the whole question of what it will be most convenient to term the "Mason's Creed" has been revived, and as the action of the Grand Lodge of England in the matter has been deemed of paramount interest by the Fraternity at large, the conclusion to which it was led by the report of the Special Committee appointed in 1877 (of whom the present writer is now the only surviving member) has been subjected to much criticism and remark. But I notice with surprise that among the widely divergent views which

are expressed with respect to the true theology of the Craft, there are none that rest on any other basis than the "Old Gothic Constitutions," not indeed as actually used by the Masons and Lodges of earlier date than the Grand Lodge, but, alas! as "digested," that is, as misquoted and given an entirely false colouring, by JAMES ANDERSON in his publications of 1723 and 1738.

Before going any further, I shall proceed to make use of a comparison. Let us try and imagine a History of Philosophy, which should begin with a notice of ADAM SMITH, and omit any mention whatever of HOBBS and DESCARTES, or the philosophers of more remote antiquity, ARISTOTLE, PLATO, and PYTHAGORAS,—at whose hands the science received its name. Or, perhaps, what is even more to the purpose, let us picture to ourselves a history of Geometry, which should open with an account of the labours of MONGE, PONCELET, and CHASLES, and pass over in utter silence not only those of DESCARTES, NEWTON, and LEIBNITZ, of the mediæval Geometry, ADELARD of Bath, but also of PTOLEMY, EUCLID, and again PYTHAGORAS, who according to PROCLUS, was the first to give geometry the form of a science.

The Written Traditions, or Manuscript Constitutions of the Freemasons, carry us back to the fourteenth century. From what earlier date they actually speak as unwritten traditions must of course rest largely on conjecture, but that they could boast of a then respectable antiquity about the year 1400 A.D. there seems to be no room for doubt, and perhaps the day may yet arrive when fresh discoveries will enable us to trace their assured origin to Egypt and the East. The Manuscript Constitutions have come down to us in numerous channels of transmission, and almost every form or copy possesses characteristics or idiosyncrasies of its own, which differ in some respects, minute or otherwise, from those of all remaining types. The chief features in each are the Legend of the Craft and the Rules or Orders, to the latter of which the title "Charges" is likewise applied. It may be worthy of consideration whether originally the "Legend" stood alone, and was not combined with the "Rules" in a single document—a suggestion I throw out for the attention of the *Cognoscenti*, as it may tend to explain why the codes of regulations embraced in the several documents exhibit such remarkable discrepancies. And perhaps by a parity of reasoning may remove a portion of the difficulty that besets a student of the Locke MS (referred to in a previous paper), by warranting the inference that the "Questions" and "Answers" (or Catechism) contained in that venerable muniment, were not always associated with, and therefore should be criticised apart from the singular and somewhat fanciful glossary which purports to be explanatory of the text.

The Masonic Constitutions will be most conveniently described as consisting of three classes of documents, corresponding as nearly as may be with the period of *use* to which they can be assigned; or, speaking of them as a whole, coinciding with what I have termed (in my *Concise History*), their first, second, and third manners, respectively. In the first of these divisions are comprised the Regius and Cooke *Codices*, which were compiled upwards of four centuries and a half ago, when every book or record was a written one, and the texts of these two manuscripts evidently refer to a period when the forest-law existed side by side with the ordinary law of the land.

The documents in the second class point with equal clearness to an era coinciding with a later stage of English mediæval law. Lastly, there is a small cluster of manuscripts wherein we meet with what are called the "New Articles"—a series of regulations (to be again referred to), the exact import of which has yet to be determined.

Of the documents in the first class, the Regius is in metrical and the Cooke in prose form. The former (*inter alia*) traces the history of Masonry from its foundation by EUCLID in Egypt down to its introduction into England by KING ATHELSTAN. It also contains rules of decorum which were plainly intended for *gentlemen* of those days, as the instructions for behaviour in the presence of a lord, at table, and in the society of ladies, would all have been equally out of place in a code of manners drawn up for the use of a guild or craft of artisans. At the date, therefore, from which the Regius poem speaks, it would appear that there was in existence a guild or fraternity which commemorated the science, but without practising the art of Masonry.

The Cooke MS., which, in the opinion of DR. BEGEMANN, is the original form of all the Manuscript Constitutions now extant, with the solitary exception of the Masonic poem (or Regius MS.), recites the origin of geometry, from which came Masonry, that JABAL, the son of LAMECH wrote all the sciences on two pillars to protect them from fire and water, and that after NOAH'S flood these pillars were found by PYTHAGORAS, the great clerk, and HERMES, the philosopher, who taught and spread the sciences they contained. NIMROD

and ABRAHAM then enter into the narrative. EUCLID was taught the Seven Sciences by the latter, and after instructing the sons of the lords in the craft of Masonry, gave them a Charge. Masonry was next favoured by DAVID and SOLOMON, after which we learn that CAROLUS SECUNDUS was a Mason before he became King of France. ST. ALBAN gave the English Masons their first Charge, and afterwards both KING ATHELSTAN and his son loved Masons well. The latter, who became a Mason himself, obtained a free patent from his father that they should make an Assembly when they thought fit.

Of KING ATHELSTAN'S reputed son it is further recorded that he loved well the science of geometry, and being aware that "no hand-craft had the practice of the science so well as Masons, he drew him to council and learned the practice of that science to his speculative, for of speculative he was a master." From which it has been contended, that anciently Masonry was both an *art* and a *science* that it possessed its operative as well as its free members, and also its peculiar regulations, but that Speculative Masonry implied merely an acquaintance with the science.

It may be incidentally remarked that the letter of HORACE WALPOLE to SIR HORACE MANN, which was cited in the first article of the present series, would possibly have dealt with the Locke MS. in a different spirit, had the writer been aware that the celebrated philosopher of Crotona—the founder, moreover, of a mystical brotherhood composed of young men of the noblest families—was a traditionary teacher of the Freemasons; or could his memory have recalled a passage with which, it is probable he was familiar, in the writings of VALERIUS MAXIMUS, the Roman historian, who, in referring (*Circa* 30 A.D.) to the Druids of Britain, says: "One would have laughed at these long-trousered philosophers, if we had not found their doctrine under the cloak of PYTHAGORAS."

The Regius and Cooke MSS. have come down to us in book form. Both are Trinitarian in religion, and while the former has been appropriately styled a Roman Catholic manual of devotion, the latter was apparently compiled (from pre-existing records) after the establishment in England of the principles of the Reformation. The Regulations in either volume are divided into Articles and Points (a peculiarity which they share with no other variety of these documents). But in each instance, both the Legend and the Regulations appear to have been used solely as histories of or disquisitions upon Masonry, nor is there anything except the usage of much later times, and under very altered circumstances, from which we may infer that the history of Masonry—or geometry,—either with or without a recital of the Articles and Points, was necessarily communicated to new members on their admission, or at any subsequent period.

To complete this section of the narrative, let me add that in the oldest cluster of documents relating to our Society, we meet with extracts, homilies, and collections *which are very far removed from the mental range of the operative Masons to whom the Manuscript Constitutions were rehearsed at a later period.* This will accord with the supposition that Masonry, as a speculative science, declined or fell into decay, *pari passu* with Masonry as an operative art.

In the second cluster of our ancient Craft documents will be found the great bulk of the Manuscript Constitutions, many of which are in roll or scroll form. A gap of more than a century and a half separates these writings from those of the earlier type, during which period the builders almost died out, and the arts lost their vigour and beauty.

"The Symbols of the Sages," as ALBERT PIKE so truly remarks, "have always at last become the idols of the common people; and when the meanings of old words and phrases have been lost, legends have always been invented, accommodated to suppositious meanings, which have become oracles, and the legends articles of religious faith."

The mythology of the Craft descended to a lower plane. It seems inherently probable that the Written Traditions of Masonry gradually become the inheritance of the operative element, and that in course of time no *English* Lodge of any importance was without a copy of the Manuscript Constitutions.

These were transcribed again and again, often by ignorant scribes, some of whom altered the phraseology in one way and some in another. New features were engrafted on the legendary history. For example, the singular story that at the building of KING SOLOMON'S Temple there was a "curious man," NAYMUS GRÆCUS, whose days were indeed long in the land, as the adventurous Greek, having completed his studies at Jerusalem, afterwards abandoned the Orient and passed into France, where he taught the science of Masonry to CHARLES MARTEL.

It is commonly supposed that from about the close of the sixteenth down to the eighteenth century the legend of the Craft, together with the Regulations (or Charges) o

the Fraternity, were read to new members on their admission, but there is room for doubt whether the practice, even in England, was of a uniform character. In Scotland it certainly was not, and equally with regard to North and South Britain, it remains an open question whether at the entry of non-operative members, any recital of our Written Traditions constituted a part of the "formality" of their reception.

In all the copies or versions of the "Constitutions" which are placed in the second or the third classes the principal Charge is, "To be true to God and the Holy Church."

The third cluster of documents consists of the "Roberts" group or family, containing some "New Articles," and by one of these it is ordained that the "Society Company, and fraternity of free Masons shall be governed by one Master and Wardens," to be chosen "att every yearly assembly."

But in the second edition of the *Book of Constitutions* published by DR. JAMES ANDERSON, with the sanction of the Grand Lodge of England, in 1738, this "Article" was made to read: "That the said Fraternity of Free Masons shall be govern'd by one *Grand Master* and as many Wardens as the Society shall think fit to appoint at every Annual General Assembly." A belief consequently sprang up that prior to the formation of a Grand Lodge there was a General Assembly which met once a year, and was presided over by a Grand Master.

The "New Articles," in the opinion of WILLIAM JAMES HUGHAN (with whom I am entirely in accord), "appear to have been agreed to by some company or body of Freemasons, having jurisdiction in one form or other over a number of Lodges, about which at the present time we are wholly without information."

It will now be convenient to mention that while the mandate entrusted to ANDERSON in 1721—that he should "digest" the "old *Gothic Constitutions*" in a new and better method—was carried out by the publication of his first "*Book of Constitutions*," in 1723, no account of the proceedings in the Grand Lodge from its formation down to the latter year has ever been given to the world, except what was supplied by ANDERSON himself in the "*New Book of Constitutions*" which appeared in 1738. Between 1723 and 1738 many things happened. Upon these I must not linger, yet the remark may be made that while ignorance and perversity were alleged to constitute his failings as a writer in 1723, old age, infirmities and straitened circumstances were certainly among his misfortunes, when engaged on the subsequent work, which appeared in 1738. Whether, indeed, leaving out for the moment the awkward fact of their discrepancies, the two *Books of Constitutions*, for which DR. ANDERSON was responsible, are to be taken not only as the basis of Masonic history but also of Masonic law, is the question which I shall ask each reader of this article to try and determine for himself. To assist him in so doing I have sought to present the general features of the old Manuscript Constitutions of the Fraternity, within the smallest possible compass, wherein the characteristics of the leading types can be made reasonably clear.

The two *Books of Constitutions*, however, the curious reader, if such there be, must examine for himself. He will find, unless my judgment is wholly at fault, that DR. ANDERSON, like DR. BENTLEY (though without his erudition), united two things that are very incompatible, dogmatism and whim, and was at the same time both conjectural and dictatorial. He often substituted creation for correction, invented where he ought rather to have investigated, and gave us what he conceived a copyist of the Manuscript Constitutions should have written, rather than what he did write.

Some day, should my span of life be sufficiently prolonged, I hope to write an essay on the "Philosophy of Masonry," and, if this aspiration be fulfilled, I shall at least be justified in affirming, that before the era of Grand Lodges, every member of the Society was necessarily a believer in the Christian faith.

IV.—THE RELIGION OF THE SOCIETY.

"We strive over opinions, but opinions are not religion, for there is but one religion, though it appears under many forms."—HERDER.

The famous COMTE DE BUFFON has remarked, and from the authority of that great writer there is scarcely any right of appeal:—

"*Tout sujet est un ; ei quelque vaste qu'il soit, il peut être renfermé dans un seul discours.*"
 "Every subject is one ; and however vast it may be, is capable of being contained in a single discourse."

There is also a Spanish proverb that will fit in very well with the matter in hand :

“ *No discourse that is long can be pleasing.* ”

And another which is even more to the point :

“ *To a good listener few words,* ”

and I shall therefore ask the indulgent reader to accord me his patient attention, while I proceed with a further instalment of the *Short Studies on Historical Masonry* which are appearing monthly in the columns of this journal.

The subject of which I am about to treat has already received much notice at the hands of controversialists, both in the Old World and the New. But though I have diligently perused all articles on the topic that have fallen in my way, with hardly an exception they resolve themselves into a set of disquisitions, which I can best describe by borrowing a few lines from an interesting work.

“ ALEXANDER DUMAS the elder,” observes MR. J. F. BOYES, “ makes mention in his *Carricolo* of an ingenious book written to shew how we may walk all day long through the different streets of Naples *without once getting into the sunshine*. Yet this is not so singular a world as at first sight it might appear to be, seeing the number of authors who have written treatises showing how we may travel through all the ramifications of the subject on which they treat precisely in the same manner.” (*Life and Books*, 175.)

The peculiar monotheistic doctrine of Masonry, it is affirmed, places upon it the indelible stamp of an origin prior to the Christian era—which may possibly be true ; and the theology of the Craft (or Society) may have passed through three distinct phases,—beginning with a belief in the unity of God and in the immortality of the soul, continuing with a profession of the Christian faith, and concluding with an acceptance of the somewhat latitudinarian—and certainly nebulous—doctrine, of which no exact definition is ever likely to be attained. These phases or manners would coincide with the respective periods of the Ancient Mysteries, of the English Freemasons prior to the era of Grand Lodges, and of the Freemasons of all countries (with a few recent exceptions) from about the middle of the eighteenth century down to the present day.

To quote MR. WILLIAM HENRY UPTON—and I know of no higher authority as a teacher of the Craft—“ Masonry, like man, consists of two parts, a body and a soul. . . . Its present body, we have little doubt, was found in *certain* of the operative Masonic organisations of the Dark or Middle Ages. Its soul—its symbolism and philosophy—we hardly less confidently believe was at one time incarnated in the Ancient Mysteries.” But the same writer goes on to say, and the qualification is precisely what we might expect from him : “ We are not professing to write history, but to state possibilities or probabilities not entirely unsupported by shreds of evidence.”

An hypothesis, indeed, although indispensable as a provisional method of grouping together facts, and giving them some sort of explanation, is after all only a *guess*, and however ingenious may be absurdly wide of the truth.

That the Freemasons, however, of the Middle Ages must have had a far-stretching, unknown history behind them few of our archæologists will be prepared to gainsay.

But, alas ! in our present state of knowledge and until the advent of a great accumulation of new and searching discoveries, any attempt to penetrate beyond the forest gloom of mediæval antiquity would be utterly futile, and stand on the same footing with an inquiry into the internal structure of the earth or into the question whether the stars are inhabited. It would be an endeavour to solve a problem, for the solution of which (at the present time) no sufficient data exist.

The Written Traditions of the Society carry us back to the fourteenth century, at which period and until some years after the formation of the earliest of Grand Lodges (1717), there was required of every candidate at his admission a profession of the Christian faith.

The particular manner in which the old system of theology was supplanted by the new, has never been very closely examined, though the materials for such a task are not far to seek.

A *Book of Constitutions* was published by DR. ANDERSON in 1723, but the circumstances under which this was compiled are only revealed in a subsequent “ book ” of the same character and description, and written by the same author, which appeared in 1738.

What I shall therefore ask the reader to do is to accompany me on ground with which he will already be familiar, while I deal in strict chronological sequence with a series of events which began in 1721 and culminated in 1738. The “ Constitutions ” of the latter

year (1738), which contain the only connected account of the proceedings of the Grand Lodge from 1717 to 1723, I shall not lay under contribution in any way, until we reach the date at which it appeared.

On June 24th, 1721, as we learn from the diary of DR. STUKELEY, that worthy was present at a meeting of the Grand Lodge, and MR. GEORGE PAYNE (twice Grand Master) "read over a new sett of articles to be observed." At that date ANDERSON was unheard of in English Masonry, nor is there any contemporary evidence associating him with the Craft of South Britain, prior to the appearance of his first *Book of Constitutions* in 1723. The General Regulations—39 in number—compiled by MR. GEORGE PAYNE, were given in the work referred to, and how much or how little they received touches at the hand of DR. ANDERSON, though matter for interesting speculation, will be passed over at this stage of the enquiry. The introductory portion of the book, however, together with the "Charges of a Free-Mason," comprising the particular article "Concerning God and Religion," may safely be ascribed to the latter. The three striking Innovations introduced by the first *Book of Constitutions* (1723) have already been described in previous "Notes" of the present series. The first of them, the drawing of a sponge over the Ancient Charge "to be true to God and the Holy Church," was doubtless looked upon by many Masons of these days in very much the same way as we now regard the absence of any religious formulary whatever in the so-called Masonry of the Grand Orient of France.

Masons of the present day, indeed, take so little interest in the past history of the Society, that the attitude of certain Grand Lodges by whom the obliteration of the first and principal Charge of the Ancient Masons has not been tamely acquiesced in, is simply viewed as a very ordinary example of Continental (or Scandinavian) perversity. But our foreign brethren, who point to the *original* Masons' Creed as a landmark, assert (and it is easier to ridicule than to confute them) that in so regarding it, *they* are the orthodox Freemasons, and *ourselves* the dissenters.

Without any doubt, however, the "Constitutions" of A.D. 1723 caused a great commotion, and the book was certainly not accepted, even by the Lodges and brethren of London and Westminster, as an authoritative code of the laws and usages of the Fraternity. The reader who is desirous of fully satisfying himself on this point in the shortest possible manner, should carefully scan HOGARTH'S singular plate, "*The Mystery of MASONRY brought to light by ye GORMOGONS,*" and endeavour to understand the moral it conveys.

The GORMOGONS, of whom the DUKE OF WHARTON was a leading spirit, would seem to have been a small Club, Society, or Order, composed of discontented and renegade Freemasons. The publication of the *Book of Constitutions*, and the apostasy of the members of Lodges who formed themselves into this Order, probably represent cause and effect. The GORMOGONS are first heard of in 1724, and in one of their manifestoes of that year there is a reference to "that empty book called '*The Constitutions of the Freemasons,*' written . . . by a *Presbyterian Teacher*, and pompously recommended by a certain Reverend *Orthodox*, tho' *Mathematical Divine*." ANDERSON and DESAGULIERS, who are here indicated, are also transparently referred to in the same publication as having taken unwarrantable liberties with the Written Traditions of the Society; while in HOGARTH'S plate, which may be called a pictorial symbolization of the "manifesto," both the *Book of Constitutions* and its author are unmercifully ridiculed, and in the case of the latter with such indecency, that the meaning of the artist, though presenting no difficulties of interpretation, I shall not attempt to describe.

It will next be convenient to record that the "Constitutions" of 1723 were "digested" for the use, and published with the approval of, the "Lodges, Brethren, and Fellows in and about the Cities of London and Westminster." The new Charges and Regulations were not proclaimed *Urbi et Orbi*, as the loose and inaccurate generalizations of the bulk of commentators might induce one to believe, but were compiled purely and solely for the use of Lodges and Brethren in what would now be called the "London District," and which at that time comprised the Metropolitan area within the purview of the "Bills of Mortality."

In the same year (1724) that witnessed the attack upon him by the GORMOGONS, DR. ANDERSON went into exile for a long period; whence, however, he emerged in 1731, and four years later obtained the permission of the Grand Lodge to print a new edition of the *Book of Constitutions*, which duly made its appearance in 1738.

In this work we meet for the first time with a connected history of the Grand Lodge of England from its formation in 1717 down to 1723. The book is very carelessly written.

The legendary portion, which begins with the "Creation of the World," is a farrago of nonsense. The historical narrative leaves upon the mind as many unsatisfied doubts as there are opportunities of testing it by other evidence, and the Charges and Regulations when compared with those of the first edition, exhibit discrepancies which leave even the most docile followers of the "Father of Masonic History" in despair.

The late HENRY JOSIAH WHYMPER observes: "That ANDERSON was not satisfied with the 1717 Charges is evidenced by the 'Constitutions' which he published in 1738. That the Grand Lodge was on this dissatisfied with ANDERSON'S revision may be deduced from the issue of the 1756 'Constitutions,' and that there was a Masonic party in sympathy with ANDERSON'S later views is proved by the adoption of his 1738 revisions by the Irish and Scottish Grand Lodges, and by the publication of a counter set of 'Constitutions,' under the authority of a dissentient body which had sprung into existence in England, claiming to represent Ancient Masonic principles. In the year 1756 the English Grand Lodge 'Constitutions' reproduced the extraordinary statements in the Charges concerning the Religion of Masonry which had been abandoned in 1738."

I am not, however, proposing to the reader that he should accompany me any further on the present occasion than the latest phase of the "Period of Transition," and the remarks of MR. WHYMPER are chiefly introduced in order to show that the Masons' Creed as formulated in the "Constitutions" of 1723, though temporarily varied by ANDERSON in 1738, was reprinted in its original form by JOHN ENTRIK in the "Constitutions" of 1756 and 1767.

In the second *Book of Constitutions* (1738) ANDERSON, instead of giving the laws continuously, places them in two columns, headed "Old" and "New Regulations" respectively. But the former are by no means reproductions of the laws of 1723, as their description would imply, for excluding mere verbal alterations no less than *fourteen* of the thirty-nine articles professedly given as the Regulations appearing in the "Constitutions" of 1723, are amended (or "digested") almost out of recognition in the "Constitutions" of 1738.

Surely, if DR. ANDERSON permitted himself such licence in the shape of alterations, omissions, and additions in the "Old Regulations" which are shewn in his edition of 1738, is it not reasonable to suppose that he may have tampered to an even greater extent not only with the "Old Gothic Constitutions" (about which no doubt whatever exists), but also with the General Regulations, ascribed to GEORGE PAYNE, that were promulgated for the benefit of the Fraternity in the earlier work of 1723?

The subject is far from having been exhaustively treated, and I can only hope that a question of such general importance may be more fully dealt with, and by some abler hand. The limits, however, within which the present article must be contained, restrict me to the contention that a fundamental change in the Religion of Masonry, which should be binding on the whole Craft, could not be legitimately carried into effect at the will of a Grand Lodge ruling over—at most, a majority only—of the Lodges and Brethren of London and Westminster, in 1723. Indeed, if we can suppose for an instant that the independent lodges in London, together with the Lodges in the country, and those in Ireland and Scotland were under moral compulsion to fall into line (on the question of religion) with the Grand Lodge of England in that year—we should have to carry our faith to the extreme point of believing that by a further word of command from the same paramount authority, all the Lodges and Brethren in the British Isles were under an equally moral obligation to hastily discard the creed which had been so recently imposed on them, and to instantly take up an entirely new position, in 1738.

It is well known, that from about the middle of the eighteenth century down to 1813, there were two Grand Lodges of England. After 1738, according to MR. H. J. WHYMPER, "two parties were formed, the Grand Lodge which was established in 1717; taking the Deistic, and the Masons who claimed to be the representatives of Ancient Masonry taking the Christian side. In the same year, 1756, the two rival Grand Lodges published counter Constitutions, each specifying its own religious views." Finally, however, there was a Union of the two bodies (1813), and the Constitutions of the United Grand Lodge of England, in its "Charge concerning God and Religion," proclaims the doctrine which is cheerfully subscribed to by the English Freemasons of to-day.

*"For Modes of Faith let graceless zealots fight;
His can't be wrong whose life is in the right."*

Before parting with the general subject, there is an observation by MADAME DE STAEL, which will serve to introduce a few closing speculations with respect to the antiquity of

the Masons' Creed. It is this,—“That past which is brought forward as a precedent for the present, was itself founded on an alteration of some past which went before it.”

Can these words have a possible bearing on the past of the Religion of Freemasonry? Was Christianity, which we know to have been the immediate past of our present formula of belief, itself “an alteration of some past that went before it?”

Let us listen to ALBERT PIKE,—“One by one,” he tells us, “sometimes with long intervals between, meaning after meaning disclosed itself to me; and I had not gone far when I became convinced that in Free-Masonry the Ancient Greater Mysteries were revived; and that, as theirs did, its super-excellence consisted in the philosophical and religious doctrines concealed in its symbols. I began dimly to discern that Masonry was a far greater thing than it had seemed to me as I received its degrees. Then the conviction dawned upon me that in its symbolism, which, and its spirit of brotherhood, are its essence, Free-masonry is more ancient and venerable than any of the world's living Religions. It has the symbols and the doctrines of the old Aryan faith, which, far older than himself, Zarathustra inculcated. The Brahmins neither knew the meaning of the Vedic hymns, nor what the Deities were whom these extolled; and the old Gáthas of the Zend-Avesta speak to the Parsees of to-day in an unknown tongue; and it seemed to me a spectacle sublime, yet pitiful, that of the ancient Faith of the kindred of our ancestors, a Faith already crowned with the hoar-frost of antiquity when the first stone of the first Pyramid was laid, holding out to the world its symbols once so eloquent and mutely and in vain asking for an interpreter.

And so I came at last to see clearly that the true greatness and majesty of Free-Masonry consists in its proprietorship of these and its other symbols; and that its symbolism is its soul.”

The obvious truth, however, must not be overlooked, that the symbols of antiquity were not used to *reveal*, but to *conceal*. Each is an enigma to be solved, and not a lesson to be read; a hieroglyph to be deciphered, and not the letters of a vulgar alphabet familiar to all.

Still, as THOMAS CARLYLE so finely observes,—“In a symbol there is concealment and yet revelation, silence and speech acting together. Some embodiment and revelation of the infinite, made to blend itself with the finite, to stand visible and, as it were, attainable there.”

But, after all, how shifting and uncertain is the result of modern research,—“We see through a glass darkly. The past is an enigma. The voices of the dead are faint and distant. History will not become a branch of positive science till the secrets of all hearts are loosed, till at eventime it is light.”

In BOOTH'S *Review of the Ancient Constitutions of Greece and Rome* there is a passage with which I shall conclude: “Time, the eldest of the gods of Greece and Rome, has seen Olympus despoiled of its deities, and their temples crumbled into dust. But, amid those mighty revolutions, religion has survived the wreck. Man, never ceasing to look for happiness in the heavens, has raised other structures for his devotion, under the symbols of the Crescent and the Cross.”

V.—ON THE REPRODUCTION OF RARE MANUSCRIPTS AND EARLY PUBLICATIONS OF THE CRAFT.

“*I love to view these things with curious eyes, and moralize.*”—ROBERT SOUTHBY.

What the various literary (or publishing) associations, unconnected with our own Fraternity, are doing with regard to the reproduction of rare prints and manuscripts, it has often occurred to me, might be imitated with advantage by the organisation of similar bodies among the Freemasons.

It is true, indeed, that even in the early dawn of “Historical Freemasonry,” there were not wanting brethren who had the foresight to discern, that a knowledge of the Art could be best brought home to the intelligence of its votaries, by multiplying the facilities they enjoyed, for an actual examination of the old Catechisms and old Constitutions of the Society.

“*The Mystery of Freemasonry*,” which belongs to the former category, and first appeared in the *Daily Journal* (London), August 15th, 1730, was reprinted by BENJAMIN FRANKLIN—before he became a Freemason—in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* of December in the same year. ANDERSON'S original *Book of Constitutions* (1723) was also reprinted by the same

American worthy—*after* his admission into the Fraternity—and took rank as the first Masonic work of any kind ever published in the New World, on its reproduction by FRANKLIN, at Philadelphia, in 1734.

The "Constitutions" of 1723 were also frequently reprinted in the Old World, and the same may be said with regard to the "Catechisms," which were for the most part pretended expositions of the ritual of Masonry. The latter are divisible into three groups—the first extending over the period 1717-27, the second having its earliest exemplars in 1730, and the third beginning with the year 1760. Copies of the second and third groups of these Catechisms have come down to us in great profusion and variety, but this has not been the case with the documents of the first group, with which indeed the two later generations of ritual mongers seem to have been singularly unfamiliar, a point that may be usefully noted by such readers of these "Notes" to whose minds I have succeeded in bringing home the conviction, that our Symbolical Traditions were far from being clearly understood by the host of writers and commentators who followed in the wake of ANDERSON and his "Constitutions" of 1723.

The addresses of eminent Freemasons—by whatever title distinguished—were often, or perhaps it will be more correct to say, were generally given to the world in printed form. The "Oration," indeed, delivered by DR. DESAGULIERS on June 24th, 1721, before the Grand Lodge, has as yet eluded our research. But the famous "Speech" of DR. FRANCIS DRAKE, author of *Eboracum*, as Junior Grand Warden of York, in 1726, was published very shortly afterwards. The "Address" of MARTIN CLARE, as Junior Grand Warden of England, in 1735, was translated into several foreign languages. These allocutions, together with the still more famous "Discourse" of the CHEVALIER RAMSAY before the Grand Lodge of France, in 1737, make up a chain of orations which, unlike the generality of their modern successors, will be found to yield fresh pleasure each time they are perused and compared.

DRAKE'S "Speech," however, and CLARE'S "Address" have long been out of print and are now only accessible in comparatively rare volumes. New editions of these two "Orations," and also an annotated English translation of RAMSAY'S "Discourse" are among the *desiderata* of Masonic literature. Upon Ramsay's meteor-like appearance in our annals I must not dwell, nor upon the popular delusion which still attributes to him the manufacture of a vast number of Masonic degrees. As a matter of fact all that we know about him as a Freemason is connected with the "Discourse" or "Oration" of 1737, in which, however, there are some passages of considerable historical importance, and on these an entirely new light has recently been shed by DR. CHETWODE CRAWLEY, who, a few years ago, disinterred from a long trance a curious tract entitled, "*A Letter from the Grand Mistress of the Female Freemasons*," which was published at Dublin in December, 1731. I must not omit to mention "A DEFENCE OF MASONRY; *occasion'd by a Pamphlet, call'd MASONRY DISSECTED.*" This, as DR. MACKAY has well said, was "the earliest scholarly discussion of the character of the Masonic Institution." It appeared shortly after the publication of SAMUEL PRICHARD'S "*Masonry Dissected*"—a well-known Catechism, or spurious ritual, of 1730, and though written by MARTIN CLARE, the name of the author was not disclosed at the time, nor was the real parentage of the tract definitely established until the last decade of the century which has just passed away. The piece was reprinted in the *Pocket Companion* of 1738, and also in the second edition of ANDERSON'S "Constitutions," which appeared in the same year. The unacknowledged brochure of MARTIN CLARE, the Catechisms and Constitutions of the earlier, and the Addresses and Orations of the later Freemasons (to whom I have referred) are all very little known, except by a minute fraction of our number, and in expressing a wish for their reproduction in a convenient form, I do so not only on account of their intrinsic value as historical documents of the Craft, but for the reason that has directed the article I am now writing within its present lines, and with a disclosure of which I shall bring to an end the contribution to this journal which will appear over my signature in its issue for July.

After the epoch of transition—1717-1738—came the Great Schism, which lasted until 1813. But during the second as well as during the first half of the eighteenth century numerous publications made their appearance; some of a trivial character, others of more importance, but most or all containing at least something that would justify their reproduction in our own times.

It is a singular circumstance, and deserves to be recorded, that while during the pendency of the Schism, the personal authority of LAURENCE DERMOTT, Grand Secretary of the younger Grand Lodge of England, stood so high that several other Grand Lodge

Jurisdictions adopted not only his "Book of Constitutions," but also the bizarre and wholly unintelligible title of *Ahiman Rezon*, by which it was described; nevertheless, after the union of the two English Grand Lodges, the influence of Dermott began to wane, and although the first and second editions of the "Constitutions" of the older Grand Lodge of England (1723 and 1738) have since been reprinted (the earlier book on numerous occasions), no reproduction whatever of the *Ahiman Rezon* has taken place (within my own knowledge), although the first (1756), second (1764), and third editions (1778) of that work are all worthy of reproduction, as without a knowledge of their contents no student of the craft can be said to have rendered the circle of his Masonic studies complete.

The *Locke MS.*, as I have already had occasion to observe in the opening article of the present series, was constantly republished during the last half of the eighteenth and throughout the whole of the nineteenth century. Its text and leading characteristics are still more recently formed the subjects of papers in the *New Age* and the *Northern Freemason*, and the interest they have evoked among the readers of either publication is of hopeful augury in the mission I am now seeking to discharge.

Germany (including Austria and Switzerland) excels all other countries, both in the affluence of its Masonic literature, and in the profundity of research which has characterised the labours of so many gifted historians of the Craft. The early efforts of German Masonic writers—translations of the English Constitutions, Catechisms, Orations, and didactic pieces—evinced both diligence and accuracy. Almost everything worthy of reproduction was translated into the German language, and much that was not. In a lesser degree the same process went on in Holland and France. But I must hasten with the narrative I have to unfold, and in order to complete it within the prescribed limits shall pass at once to examples of what has been done in our own day as regards the reprinting of scarce Masonic works, and the reproduction of ancient manuscripts.

It may be premised, however, as an axiom upon which all Masonic scholars are agreed, that what is required to inaugurate a real educational movement in Masonry is not an unaided perusal of what has been produced by the Masonic authors, pamphleteers, and journalists of the last hundred or more years, but a careful study of those manuscript records of the Craft which antedate the era of Grand Lodges; and of what was written and published about Masonry during the period beginning with the first and ending with the third quarter of the eighteenth century.

The first *fac-simile* reprint of ANDERSON'S earlier "Book of Constitutions" (1723) was made from a copy of the original in the library of ENOCH TERRY CARSON, of Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1855. This famous collector republished, for private distribution among his friends, several rare pamphlets—comprising specimens of the Old Constitutions and Catechisms, and of the Engraved Lists of Lodges.

The same useful work was carried on, though in a slightly different manner, by CORNELIUS MOORE, in the *Masonic Review*; by CLIFFORD P. MACCALLA in the *Keystone*; and by ALBERT PIKE in his wonderful *Official Bulletin*. All the four brethren I have last named are dead, but there still happily survives a fifth American scholar of the Craft, SERENO D. NICKERSON, of Boston, Massachusetts, by whom a goodly amount of the flotsam and jetsam of old and fugitive Masonic literature was rescued from oblivion during the short but brilliant career of the *New England Freemason*.

In this country we are under a heavy weight of obligation to WILLIAM JAMES HUGHAN, not only for what he has actually written (a topic on which I should like to, but must not, dilate), but for what he has reprinted (or reproduced). I shall be within the mark in saying that at least *thirty-nine* "forms" of the Old Manuscript Constitutions, or Written Traditions of the Society have, through his personal exertions (which included transcription from the originals), been multiplied from single or rare copies by means of the printers' art; though I must be careful to add that there is scarcely any kind of printed or documentary evidence bearing on the early history of Freemasonry which is unrepresented in the valuable *collectanea* which have been freely reproduced for the benefit of his fellow students by our distinguished BRO. HUGHAN during his long literary labours for the Craft.

To HENRY SADLER we also owe much, and in perusing his instructive books one hardly knows whether to award the chief meed of praise to his collection of *new facts*, or to the dexterous manner in which he makes use of them.

In a neighbouring jurisdiction, there is DR. CHETWODE CRAWLEY, who, in his *Cæmentaria Hibernica* (and other works), has given us reprints of valuable evidence relating to

the Society, which would otherwise have remained entombed in solitary copies existing unprized and uncared for in the recesses of certain public and private libraries. Nor can I pass over in silence the name of GEORGE WILLIAM SPETH, during whose talented editorship the publications of the Quatuor Coronati Lodge attained their highest lustre. But, alas! since the lamented death of BRO. SPETH, the archaeological reprints, the issue of which was the crowning achievement of that worthy brother's literary career, have ceased to appear.

To another member of the same Lodge, HENRY JOSIAH WHYMPER, who has also passed over to the silent shore, we are indebted for the reproduction in *fac-simile* of the Regius Poem, the oldest Manuscript of the Craft.

I trust to have carried the reader with me as regards two points. The first—that single or rare copies of early Masonic prints or manuscripts are worthy of preservation; and the second, that the scholars of the Craft are very desirous that such papers or documents should be reprinted or in some way reproduced. A third point remains, which will next be discussed.

There are many students of Masonry, who would like to know a little more about the Art, than the mere smattering of ritual and ceremonial (not always based, moreover, on the proceedings of any actual past), which in the majority of instances is all the “instruction” that inquiring brethren are able to obtain. There are others, who, having accomplished the feat of perusing a multitude of Masonic books—are impelled to embark on the career of authorship themselves, if only to relieve their minds of the doubts and uncertainties which have crept in, while their painful study of the conflicting views expressed by writers of the Craft on most or all of the topics considered by them has been carried on.

To the latter class, however, I shall tender the advice that they will do well to begin their additions to the literature of Freemasonry, not by writing *new books* but by reprinting certain of the *old ones*. The amount of ink vainly shed in attempting to settle by plausible arguments the Problem of the Degrees would fill a reservoir; whereas, by the publication of two small reprints—PENNELL'S *Irish Constitutions*, 1730 and SMITH'S *Pocket Companion*, 1734-35—in his *Caementaria Hibernica*, DR. CHETWODE CRAWLEY has presented irrefragable evidence—1st, that *two* degrees only were worked under the Grand Lodge of Ireland until after 1730; and secondly, that JOHN PENNELL, who published the *Irish Constitutions* of that year, was *mistaken* in his belief that *three* degrees, and not *two* only, were named by ANDERSON in the *English Constitutions*—as being worked under the Grand Lodge at London, in 1723.

To all Masonic students, indeed, whether they wish to instruct others or to acquire instruction themselves, I strongly recommend the practice of reproducing old and rare pamphlets relating to the Society. How this recommendation could be best carried into effect is a question with which I shall attempt to deal on some future occasion. It is evident of course, that steps should be taken to make an initial selection of certain books, pamphlets and manuscripts, the reproduction of which would meet with the general assent of our *literati*.

I hope the day may yet arrive when there will be a Masonic Book Club, formed on the lines suggested in the present article, in every large town of the kingdom. Many public libraries, as well as those of the Grand Lodges and other governing Masonic bodies of the world, would probably be among the subscribers for reprints. There are also numerous collectors both in this country and abroad who would gladly welcome any movement of the kind.

There are other functions, besides that upon which I have laid so much stress, that Masonic Book Clubs (or Literary Societies) might usefully undertake and discharge. The publication of Lodge Records dating earlier than the last quarter of the eighteenth century would be among the number. But while dealing generally with the objects which, by the combined efforts of an association of zealous Masonic workers might be attained, the particular suggestion which in the present paper I wish to throw out is, that any studious brother who is desirous of making his mark on the Masonry of our own times, can do so by carefully planning and carrying into effect a well-considered scheme for the republication or reproduction of some valuable literary relic of the past.

VI.—AN INVENTORY OF ANCIENT CRAFT DOCUMENTS.

“ *An olio*
Compiled from quarto and from folio ;
From pamphlet, newspaper, and book.”

The Grand Lodges in the United States and Canada number fifty-seven and all of them (with occasional intermissions) publish annual volumes of their “*Proceedings*.” Some of these are read (outside the limits of the jurisdictions to which they particularly refer) for one reason and some for another, but it is doubtful whether the whole fifty-seven volumes are perused by any Masons except the Reporters on Correspondence, whose duty it is to exercise a fraternal criticism with regard to what occurs, year by year, within the respective orbits of the Masonic Powers that together constitute the Family of Grand Lodges, or Governing Bodies of the Craft ; whose Orthodoxy (or “*Regularity*”) has been conventionally determined and become an article of faith among all those who are of good standing in the Fraternity.

The “*Proceedings*” of certain Grand Lodges are carefully studied, because various topics of immediate interest are skilfully dealt with in their contents. But a limited number of volumes enjoy a wider vogue, and are read, not alone for their Masonic interest, but also on account of the beautiful language in which the thoughts of a few of the Reporters on Correspondence are expressed.

There are still other volumes of “*Proceedings*” which claim, if they do not always receive, the notice of vigilant students, as possessing items of information which are not ordinarily found among the “*Transactions*” of Grand Lodges, and when met with should be carefully taken heed of for future reference, by all whose inclinations lie in the direction of an exhumation and critical examination of old or rare documents of the Craft.

Let me proceed with an example, which I derive from the “*Proceedings*” of the Grand Lodge of Nova Scotia for 1890. For upwards of sixteen years the volume has been in my possession, and, though I have always intended to point out that what may be termed its leading characteristic, is worthy not only of imitation by the entire “*Family of Grand Lodges*,” but might be usefully stored in the memory of every writer of the Craft—nevertheless, the years have been permitted to roll by without my having made any attempt whatever to carry out the task which I had voluntarily undertaken to perform.

Page 441 of the “*Proceedings*,” Grand Lodge of Nova Scotia, 1890, is headed “*Ancient Masonic Documents*,” and beneath is a “*preface*,” which reads :—“*For many years past Grand Lodge has been endeavouring to collect together the many ancient and venerable Masonic documents known to be in the province in the possession of brethren of the Craft and others, for the purpose of ensuring the safe keeping of the same. Much time and labour have been devoted to the subject, and the following report, made to the Grand Lodge in 1884, gives the first result of the committee appointed for the purpose.*”

The “*report*” is too long for quotation, but among the very many venerable articles enumerated by the Committee in their catalogue, is a Bible of great historic interest, which is now the property of the Grand Lodge.

This Bible is the subject of an anecdote, and an anecdote, if it be worth anything, is worth remembering. Therefore, if I can rivet it on the memory of the reader, it may tend to render his mind more receptive with respect to the moral, which, at a later stage it will be my object to convey.

It is related of the RIGHT REV. DR. CHARLES INGLIS, Lord Bishop of Nova Scotia and the first Colonial Bishop in the British Dominions, that he was Rector of Trinity Church in the City of New York during the Revolutionary struggle, which terminated in the independence of the United States of America. On one occasion the more violent of the revolutionists determined to show their zeal for the cause which they had espoused by threatening vengeance, even to the death, against the Rector and his congregation, as being the most prominent representatives of British interests in the community. With this intention they sent a notice to DR. INGLIS to the effect that if he prayed for the King and the Royal Family, in the course of the usual service of the Church on the following Sunday, a party of resolute men would then be in the gallery ready to fire and to shoot him dead on the instant. Most men would quail under such a threat, and be anxious to adopt every possible precaution to thwart so vile a project. Not so the courageous and devoted Rector of Trinity. He went through the service with his accustomed placidity, praying for King George and the Royal Family with more than his usual fervency, and doubtless expecting that every passing moment would be his last. But no catastrophe occurred.

The impressive service of the Episcopal Church was not once interrupted. The would-be assassins were overawed by the resolute and fearless manner of the rector, and sat quietly in their seats during the whole service.

The spirited conduct of DR. INGLIS on this trying occasion immediately became the theme of much commendation and praise, as indicating a deep-rooted and heart-felt attachment to the Royal cause. The fame of his courage and patriotism reached the ears of King George III., who was unusually impressed with this singular instance of fearless devotion to his interests and desired to ascertain in what manner he could most appropriately make known to the Rector of Trinity the Royal approbation of his conduct. After some consideration, His Majesty ultimately resolved to transmit to DR. INGLIS a magnificent Bible and Prayer Book, folio size, and splendidly bound, with the Royal monogram on the covers, as a small token of recognition of fearless devotion to the Royal cause under very trying circumstances.

After the war was over, the Rector of Trinity emigrated to Nova Scotia, where the Royal gift, the Bible and Prayer Book, were subsequently consigned to the keeping of his son-in-law, the Rector of Fredericton, N.B., for the special benefit of his own charge, then in the wilderness. There he left them, and there they remained until the old church was taken down to make room for the new cathedral. Of course, the new edifice was furnished with new books of a modern pattern. The volumes with the Royal monogram, now grown faded and somewhat battered from long and honourable usage, were thrown on one side, and found a last resting-place in the vestry of the new building. There they were seen by the Rev. DR. ROBERTSON, of Middleton, who suggested to the proper authorities that the volumes might be rendered very useful in his extensive parish, where such books were necessarily scarce. The proposition was accepted, and the Royal gift to DR. CHARLES INGLIS passed into the possession of DR. ROBERTSON. The Prayer Book is now on the Committee Table of Trinity Church, Wilmot; but the Bible, after a long period of use in the new Church of Farmington, Wilmot, six miles from Clermont, where it first landed in Nova Scotia, was ultimately presented by DR. ROBERTSON to the Grand Lodge (N.S.), and is justly esteemed as one of the choicest relics of that Masonic jurisdiction.

The "Catalogue of Ancient Masonic Documents" in possession of the Grand Lodge of Nova Scotia begins on page 444 of the volume of "*Proceedings*" for 1890, and ends on page 478. Then follow lists of Documents in the custody of Subordinate Lodges, viz. :— Union, Zion, Virgin, Artillery, (a second) Zion, Parr, Solomon, Hiram, St. Andrew's, St. John's, Digby, Temple, Fidelity, (a second) Hiram, Chester, St. George's, Windsor, Port Edward, Walmesley, New Caledonia, Cornwallis, Harmony, (a third) Hiram, Royal Navy, (a second) St. George's, (a second) Union, Wentworth, Royal Welsh Fusiliers, (a third) Zion, (a second) Solomon, Morning Star, Hiram York, Royal Nova Scotia Regiment, Annapolis Royal, (a second) St. John's, Good Lodge (66th foot), Hibernia, (a third) St. John's, Trinity, Midian, Orphan's Friend, Newport, Eastern Star (a third) Union, Royal Standard, "No 40," Regent, Fortitude, St. Lawrence, Unity, Morning Star, Moira, Colchester Union, Concord, Golden Rule, Cumberland, Albion, Royal Albion, Rising Sun, "Lodge 322," (I. R.), and Oxfordshire Light Infantry.

The list of documents in the possession of subordinate Lodges extends from page 479 to page 512, and the entire catalogue (pp. 444-512) ranges over a space of 69 closely-printed pages. The earliest dated documents are of the year 1781, but a certain number are undated. A strong military element pervaded the jurisdiction, and the documents attest that a larger number of ambulatory lodges were at work in Nova Scotia than their mere titles or designations might seem to imply. The "Historical Inventory" of this Grand Lodge (N.S.) may perhaps be best described as a sort of Masonic "State-paper" of unique value, being absolutely without a rival, as no counterpart in any other (Grand) jurisdiction is known to exist. There are reasons which combine to render the list of Nova Scotian documents of great utility to explorers, either in the highways or byeways of Masonic history. The Province of Nova Scotia was one of the earliest homes of the American Craft. It was the battle-ground of the Ancients and the Moderns; and SIR JOHN MOORE, who fell at Corunna, was initiated into Masonry in St. John's Lodge, Halifax, in 1780; and if the scattered shreds of evidence, from which alone we derive what knowledge we possess with regard to "travelling Lodges" at an era now remote from our own, are ever to be worked into a connected whole, this will only be possible through the instrumentality of the "Historical Inventory," upon the merits of which I have dilated at such length. But if so much can be truthfully affirmed of the benefit conferred on the students of Freemasonry by a Catalogue revealing the documentary treasures of the Grand Lodge of Nova Scotia,

what might we not have to expect were a spirit of emulation to arise within the jurisdictions of the three Senior Grand Lodges of the Old World ?

At Dublin, there is much that would gratify the yearning of the Masonic archæologist, if an index to the archives were afforded him. In London—having regard to the destruction of Irish records by ALEXANDER SETON—there is more. But the palm must be awarded to Edinburgh, or rather to Scotland, for though the documents in the possession of the Grand Lodge are of very great interest and value, those in the custody of certain Scottish private Lodges must be placed on a still higher plane as being endowed with a weight and authority which entitles them to figure in a separate category of their own.

On this point I should like to enlarge, but the stage has now been reached, to which, perhaps by devious methods I have endeavoured to lead up, and the reader, I trust, will bear with me, while I attempt to sum up the moral which the present paper is intended to convey.

In my last article, I pointed out that to any brother seeking to make his mark on the Masonry of our time, there were not wanting facilities whereby such aspiration could be fulfilled. In the article of the present month I shall carry the argument a little farther, and to begin with let me observe, that the great work carried out in the Province of Nova Scotia might be imitated on a smaller scale (for to rival it completely would require the active assistance of a Grand Lodge) by the brethren of many Irish, English and Scotch Lodges. The records of *all* lodges down to about 1760 are worthy of careful examination, and some of later date as survivals of old customs, it is indeed true, may continue to exist in particular instances, while they have completely dropped out of use in a general way. But I do not myself believe that after the third quarter of the eighteenth century, much will often be found in minutes of Lodges that will be deemed of real value by a competent archæologist of the Craft. The records, however of Lodges extending over the first three-quarters of the century which witnessed the creation of the first Grand Lodge are worthy of patient examination by any brother whose ambition it is to become a student of the Craft.

It is a reproach to English Masonry that the minutes of the Lodge which met at the Swan and Rummer, in Finch Lane, London, in 1726, have not been fully reproduced. These valuable records throw the earliest known light on the method of communicating the degrees of Masonry in the English Lodges, and for the glimpse that has been obtained of them we are indebted to an interesting paper by MR. WILLIAM JAMES HUGHAN, which appeared in the tenth volume of *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum*. There is another London lodge, the present OLD KING'S ARMS, No 28 an exact reprint of whose early records is—for several reasons—very greatly to be desired. How many, indeed, of our Metropolitan lodges possess records of any real antiquity, it is impossible—in the absence of aught resembling the "Historical Inventory" of the Grand Lodge of Nova Scotia—to even approximately determine.

The Provincial Lodges of England have apparently taken greater care of their old documents than has happened in the case of the London brethren. For example, there is the Royal Cumberland Lodge, No. 41, Bath, the minutes of which body go back to 1732. An excellent *abridged* "History" of this famous Lodge has been written by MR. THOMAS PAYNE ASHLEY (1873), but the curious reader would like to peruse in detail the minutes of the meetings at which—from 1738—DR. DESAGULIERS, a former Grand Master, was present, "taking great interest in the welfare of the Lodge and frequently performing the ceremonies."

The Irish records—or, rather, what remain of them—have had the good fortune to engage the attention of DR. CHETWODE CRAWLEY and that the duties of Grand Treasurer of Ireland may not conflict with the issue of further volumes of *Cæmentaria Hibernica*, will be the wish of us all.

The Time Immemorial Lodges of Scotland would demand not one but a whole series of articles, were it necessary to demonstrate what a boon to the literature of Freemasonry the publication of their early records would really be. These Lodges are the wonder and the glory of the universal craft, and that among the men of letters in the Scottish jurisdiction who are also Freemasons, more may shortly be found who will undertake the rôle of Lodge historian, is a pious aspiration, which I trust may be fulfilled.

THE MASONIC PRESS.

I.

A NEW DEPARTURE IN MASONIC JOURNALISM.

[*Freemason*, 1904.]

The Masonic literature of the North American Union is of a most extensive character, and many—or, indeed, it will be permissible to say the greater number of the publications which may be classified under the above title—are distributed gratuitously, and with no niggard hand. The *Proceedings* of the various Grand Bodies of which there are usually four, a Grand Lodge, Chapter, Council, and Commandery, in every State—are circulated far and wide. But for all practical purposes, these publications, though embodying the patient industry, and more often than not the brilliant research of very eminent men, are comparatively sealed books to the English reader. For this, many reasons might be assigned, but in the present article I must content myself with stating the bare fact, for such it undoubtedly is, that the printed transactions of nearly four hundred Grand Lodges, Chapters, Councils, and Commanderies in the United States, are not known, even by name, to more than an insignificant minority of the students of Masonry residing elsewhere than in the North American Continent.

Then there are the "Magazines," or "Journals of the Craft," the total number of which varies very slightly year by year, for while new Masonic periodicals are constantly springing into existence, older ones are as frequently dropping out of it. Twenty-two American "Journals of the Craft" are specifically referred to in the *Proceedings* of the Grand Lodge of Illinois for 1903 (p. 197). Nor is the list given an exhaustive one, for there is no mention of the *Keystone* or *Philadelphia Freemason*, to whose merits I should willingly bear testimony (were it not an act of supererogation), having had the privilege of reading every issue of the paper for a quarter of a century and more. The *Quarterly Bulletin*, published by the Grand Lodge of Iowa, is also absent from the list, and to this "Journal" I shall invite attention, from the circumstance that—so far as my knowledge extends—it is the only publication of the kind which is issued as the direct organ of an American Grand Lodge. Nor should I neglect to add, as tending to fortify some conclusions that will presently be advanced, that the great utility of the *Quarterly Bulletin* as such organ, has been fully recognised and appreciated in Iowa by the Masonic authorities of that State.

"There is, or may be," says Dr. Mackey, in his *Encyclopædia*, "a Grand Lodge, Grand Chapter, Grand Council, and Grand Commandery in each State," and to the *Proceedings* which are annually published by these "Grand Bodies" I have already referred. There is no general Grand Lodge of the United States, but there is a General Grand Chapter, Grand Council, and Grand Encampment, and the *Transactions* of every one of these Institutions are printed and extensively circulated throughout the Republic.

I shall pass over a variety of associations claiming to be "Grand Masonic Bodies," which though contributing their quota to the ever-growing mass of "Proceedings," are not regarded as being "in good standing" by the (American) Family of Grand Lodges. But there are yet other *Transactions* published by two Governing (or "Grand") Bodies which together control what may be termed the innermost sanctuary of the Freemasons of the United States. These are the Supreme Councils, 33°, for the Northern and Southern Jurisdictions, respectively. What is ordinarily described as the "Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite" requires no description at my hands, or, at least, any further than may be necessary to elucidate certain details which will shortly be laid before the reader. The actual history, therefore, of the Rite will not be touched upon in the present article, and I shall proceed with the remark, that the most influential Masonic Associations in the United States are the Supreme Councils, 33°, one of which (S.J.) is presided over by Bro. James D. Richardson; and the other by Bro. Henry L. Palmer (N.J.). With the *Proceedings* of the latter (or Northern) I am unfamiliar, but those of the former (or Southern) Jurisdiction have been sent me for many years, in the first instance by my deeply-lamented friend, the late Albert Pike, and since his decease, in accordance with a "Resolution" enacted by the Supreme Councils (S.J.) in recognition of the tribute of affection and veneration, which, in the form of a literary portrait, I sought to pay to the memory of that great man

I have briefly passed in review the two leading channels through which the great bulk of Masonic literature is circulated in the United States. There are books, indeed, which might be enumerated as forming a class of their own distinct from the *Proceedings* (or *Transactions*), and the *Magazines*, but these are mainly Lodge Histories or Manuals of Masonic Law. The services of the leading writers of the Craft in the American Republic are almost exclusively retained by the Grand Bodies of their respective States. The Knights of the Round Table, as the Reporters on Correspondence in the several jurisdictions are often designated, have scarcely the time, if, indeed, they possess the inclination, to travel outside the boundaries of their own prescribed duties. Exceptions, of course, there are, but they are few in number, and as the Corps of Reporters are mainly in the habit of addressing their remarks to one another, it necessarily follows that the organ of communication which is held in the most esteem is the printed message that every writer on correspondence is privileged to deliver, and which it is the duty of his *confrères* in the other jurisdictions to carefully read and examine.

I must, however, pass away, though very reluctantly, from the *Proceedings* of the Grand Lodges, Chapters, Councils, and Commanderies. Nor can I linger over the *Magazines*, that is to say, so far as they are the offspring of individual enterprise, and unconnected with any of the Masonic Powers.

But there will shortly be numbered among the class of publications to which I have last referred, an entirely novel literary undertaking, being the organ designate of what is popularly known as the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, and which will be published under the direction of the Supreme Council, 33°, of the Southern Jurisdiction (U.S.A.)

Of this Body, Bro. James D. Richardson is the official head, or, in the somewhat inflated language of the Rite, the "Sovereign Grand Commander," and from the Allocution of this dignitary—upon whose shoulders a portion of Albert Pike's mantle seems to have worthily fallen—delivered on the 13th of October, 1903, I extract the following:—

"There has been a statute during my entire term as Acting Grand Commander, and as Grand Commander, requiring the latter named officer to edit and publish a Quarterly Bulletin. We can each recall with pride and pleasure the splendid Bulletins made and issued by Grand Commander Pike. Many of their pages were filled with original matter, while many contained valuable historic data, and still other contributions highly appropriate, instructive, and useful to the Rite. The Council is doing nothing whatever in the way of the education of its own members, much less the people at large. This is inexcusable in view of our opportunities. I do not believe that Bulletins such as we were wont to have will meet the requirement. They were published quarterly, and had no general circulation. There was no income to the Supreme Council worth mentioning from their sales. They were read by no one except members of the Order, and not generally by them, for they could not obtain them. They did not keep the Brethren of one State informed of what was happening in respect to the Rite in any other State. They contained no news, and by this I do not mean the current news of the business or political world, but I mean Masonic news. After earnest thought and painstaking deliberation, I am convinced there should be some publication by means of which the official acts and orders of the Grand Commander could be promptly promulgated, by and through which Masons could communicate, and be communicated with, on all subjects of interest to them, and by which they could be kept in touch with each other, and be informed as to the transactions and events occurring throughout the jurisdiction. To this end I believe the time has come when this Supreme Council should found and publish a monthly Bulletin or Magazine, to be devoted not only to its interest and upbuilding, and to the promotion of its objects and purposes, and to Free-Masonry, but to the education of the people in the very highest sense. A magazine of this character, founded and conducted in the interest of the Order, is yet to be established. The older methods of holding annual meetings and of publishing bulletins and quarterly reviews, good in themselves, are inadequate to meet the requirements of existing conditions. The lawyers, the physicians of all schools, preachers of all religious sects and denominations, the soldiers and sailors, the butchers and the tailors—in fact, almost every profession, occupation, trade, and business—have their periodicals devoted to their interest. Free-Masonry has many periodicals published in its interest, but there is not one which attempts to cover the field which could be reached by a magazine such as we should publish. A magazine such as I am discussing, if published by the Supreme Council, should reach every member of the Rite in the Southern Jurisdiction. It should also reach, because it would interest them, thousands of the Scottish Rite Masons of the Northern Jurisdiction, and hundreds of the Rite in foreign countries, beside other thou-

sands of the one million Master Masons of the York Rite Lodges in our country. Each issue of such a magazine should reach a high standard of literary and artistic excellence. It would afford thinkers and students an opportunity of presenting to the Masonic world their best thoughts on the Symbolism and Philosophy of Free-Masonry. It would cultivate throughout its pages sentiments of genuine brotherhood among the Craft, and serve to encourage the social features of the Order. The founding of a magazine with such aims, patronised by an ancient fraternity, which numbers among its members emperors, kings, presidents, and rulers, together with many of the greatest divines, philosophers, scientists, and statesmen of this and former centuries, will, we believe, prove to be an object to which every good Mason will gladly contribute in every possible manner."

A pause will now be made, while the circumstances under which the new magazine is being launched are rendered a little clearer, by a brief reference to the position in life of its founder, the chief dignitary of the "Mother Supreme Council of the World."

Bro. James Daniel Richardson is now, and has been for nearly twenty years, a member of the United States Congress, and for four years he has been the leader of one of the great political parties on the floor of the House of Representatives. But for some time past his duties in connection with the "House of the Temple," or "Grand East," of the "Ancient and Accepted Rite" (S.J.), have been, at the very least, of an equally onerous character. "I realise now, and have known for two years," says Bro. Richardson, in "*The Allocution*," from which I have so recently quoted, "that it was not possible for me to do all things that the Grand Commander of the Southern Supreme Council should do, and at the same time to do and perform all the duties and labours of a member of Congress. Clearly realising this fact, the question has been constantly before me, what shall I do? I have repeatedly asked myself, shall I resign from the office of Grand Commander, or retire from my seat in Congress? One or the other of these two things I must and shall do. In the condition of mind in which I have found myself, I have frequently resorted to the council of friends, and have asked their advice as to the proper course to pursue. They have differed in their opinions, and the conferences with them have usually closed with the expression of opinion from them that I should settle the question myself. I have, therefore, taken final counsel of my own judgment, and have reached the conclusion, and now announce it. I shall retire from politics, and whatever of ability and talent I possess shall be dedicated to the office of Grand Commander and to the propagation of Scottish Masonry; I prefer to withdraw from the arena of discord to the asylum of harmony; to quit contentious strife, wrangles, and dissensions for the alluring paths of friendship, love and union."

If we can picture to ourselves the spectacle of one of the party leaders in our own House of Commons, vacating his seat in Parliament and taking up his residence at 33 Golden Square, in order to devote the remainder of his life to the propagation in this country of what is ordinarily known as the "Ancient and Accepted Rite," it will convey a very good idea of the important step taken by Bro. James D. Richardson in voluntarily severing his connection with politics, so that he might employ the whole of his energies in the service of the "Mother Supreme Council of the World." Though, indeed, to complete the parallel, we must give an even freer rein to the imagination, and suppose the leader of our own House of Commons, or the leader of the Opposition, after having shaken off the trammels of political life, and ensconced himself at 33 Golden Square, to issue a stirring manifesto, heralding the advent of a new Masonic magazine!

Returning to the Allocution of Grand Commander Richardson, it was, on motion, resolved: "That the Supreme Council will found and publish a literary monthly magazine, to be devoted to the interests and upbuilding, to the promotion of its objects and purposes, and to Free-Masonry, as well as to the education of all the people in the highest sense." By a later clause of the Report, which was also adopted, the sum of 16,500 dollars was appropriated for the expenses of the first year.

From the February number of the *Quarterly Bulletin*, Grand Lodge of Iowa, I extract the following:—

"The *Washington Magazine* is the title of a new publication to be issued from the capital of the nation in the interest of the A. & A. Scottish Rite. All matters connected with its publication are being placed in the hands of a staff of qualified editors, both Masonic and literary. It is expected that this new magazine will prove one of the largest and best ever published in the country in the interest of Masonry, and that it will be made popular from the start. We understand that its first issue will be in the neighbourhood of sixty thousand copies. It is expected to appear early in the Spring."

The "Initial Number" of the new magazine, as I glean from the *Square and Compass*, of Denver, Colorado, will be sent to every Scottish Rite Mason in the United States, "nearly 60,000 in number," but if the "forewords" of Bro. James D. Richardson are to be regarded as affording any criterion of its circulation, the issue of copies will by no means be restricted to members of the Rite, either in the New or the Old Worlds, but may be expected to extend to a large circle of readers for whom the so-called "High Degrees" possess no attraction, and whose conception of Masonry has its limits in the ancient landmarks of the Craft.

The appearance of the new magazine will be awaited with impatience and by no future reader with more pleasurable anticipations than myself. On the probable contents of the first number it would be idle to speculate, but as a Masonic journalist of very long standing, I shall, perhaps, be excused if I throw out a few suggestions with respect to the ultimate scope of the undertaking as they occur to my mind.

In the first place, I would humbly submit that for the proper education of the Freemasons as a body (which will, of course, include the members of every conceivable Rite), the kind of literature required is not so much what has been produced by the Masonic authors, pamphleteers, and journalists of the last hundred years or more, as what was written about Masonry at an earlier period, beginning with the first and ending with the third quarter of the eighteenth century. Of these latter writings few copies have been preserved, and in certain instances hardly more than a solitary impression is known to exist. My suggestion, therefore, is, that what the late Enoch Terry Carson, of Cincinnati, Ohio, the great collector and bibliophile, attempted to do on a small scale, should be carried out on a larger scale by the managing directors of the *Washington Magazine*. With each number of the actual magazine might be enclosed an inset, and each of the latter should form a part, section, or chapter of a series of archaeological reprints.

The reproduction—by means of the printer's art—of ancient manuscripts and rare pamphlets, was for some time a characteristic and, perhaps, the most notable feature of the Quatuor Coronati publications. The practice, however, for some unknown reason, has been discontinued, but the *Antigrapha* of Lodge No. 2076, though the process of selection was devoid of any systematic basis, will probably survive when the great bulk of its *Transactions* have passed into oblivion.

I have referred to the late Enoch Terry Carson, but Masonic archaeologists are also under a heavy weight of obligation to Bro. W. J. Hughan, whose reproductions of the old Manuscript Constitutions may be said to have popularised the study of those interesting relics of the past; and to Dr. Chetwode Crawley, who, in his *Cementaria Hibernica* (and other works), has given us reprints of valuable evidence relating to the Society, which would otherwise have remained entombed in solitary copies, existing unprized and unknown in the recesses of certain public and private collections.

But the efforts of individual lodges in the promotion of Masonic research, are at best fitful and evanescent; and those of individual Masons (in the same direction) are necessarily limited by certain special considerations, among which the question of expense takes a leading place.

We may, therefore, hope to find, in a literary enterprise set on foot and financed by a leading and wealthy Rite, a fixity of purpose that seems to be incompatible with the operations of a Lodge, together with a freedom of expenditure (in the realm of antiquity), beyond the rivalry of any individual Freemason.

That the wise sayings of the great man who raised the Ancient and Accepted Rite from comparative obscurity to the commanding position which it occupies at this day, will be reproduced—let us hope as nearly as possible in a complete form—by (or in connection with) the new magazine, may, perhaps, be confidently relied on.

The general subject is one upon which I should like to linger, but the space allotted to me has already been exceeded, and the little I have to add must be reduced within a very small compass.

The *Quarterly Bulletin*, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and the *Washington Magazine*, of the Federal Capital (U.S.A.), will shortly afford us the opportunity of making a comparison between the official organs of an influential "Grand Lodge" and of the paramount "Supreme Council" respectively. The Grand Lodge of Iowa is the possessor of a really splendid library and museum, and the objects of interest in its fine collection are constantly being augmented by the contributions of subscribers to (and readers of) its *Quarterly Bulletin*.

Is it too much to hope, that in the near future the Mother Grand Lodge of the World may see fit to add to the number of its executive officers by the appointment of a Grand Librarian—a portion of whose duties should comprise the editing of a *Quarterly Bulletin*?

And, also (by way of completing the vision of a Masonic Utopia which I have conjured up) that the lifetime of the next generation may witness the successful labours of a Grand Historiographer, in preparing for publication—from the original records—the eventful annals of the earliest of Grand Lodges?

To turn, in the next place, to those influential bodies—the Supreme Council, 33°, at Golden Square, and the Grand Lodge of the Mark Degree, in Great Queen Street—is it altogether out of the question to believe in the possibility of associations which are governed by such sagacious rulers, resolving to follow the example which has been set them by the projectors of the *Washington Magazine*?

The governing bodies to whom I have last referred are under no obligation whatever to justify the necessity for their existence to other than members of the "Rite" or "Degree" but the claim of either to occupy a high position in the hierarchy of Masonic Powers would be freely conceded by the Universal Craft—or "Rite of the Multitude"—were one (or both) of them to walk in the footsteps of the Supreme Council at Washington, D.C.; and boldly inaugurate a new educational era in the history of British Freemasonry.

II.

ON THE UTILITY OF THE MASONIC PRESS.

[*Freemason*, April and May, 1905.]

Perhaps you would like to see how some very common things impress me. I always take off my hat if I stop to speak to a stone-cutter at his work. "Why?" do you ask me? Because I know that his is the only labour that is likely to endure. A score of centuries has not effaced the marks of the Greek's or the Roman's chisel on his block of marble.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

That Operative and Speculative Masonry existed side by side has been clearly established, but the precise manner in which what is usually believed to be the *older* system was at first overshadowed and finally supplanted by the *newer* one has not yet been explained nor from the nature of things is it probable that it ever will. Neither are we aware whether Masonry, so to speak, always possessed its Speculative side. "Old Architecture," as we are told by Mr. W. R. Lethaby, "lives because it has a purpose. Modern architecture, to be real, must not be a mere envelope without contents." (*Architecture, Mysticism, and Myth*, p. 7.) And as M. Cesar Daly says, in his *Hautes Etudes*, "if we would have architecture create an interest, real and general, we must have a symbolism, immediately comprehensible to the great majority of spectators." "Has anyone," asks Mr. Arthur Lillie, in his *Buddhism in Christendom*, "puzzled over the fact, that the only modern representatives of the Initiates of the Ancient Mysteries should occupy themselves entirely with the business of the hodman and builder?" "Esoteric Masonry," he goes on to say, "occupied itself in reality, with a temple built without sound of hammer, axe, or tool of iron. It was the Temple of the skies, the Macrocosmos, in point of fact."

But without entering the region of more or less probable conjecture, "Even History, that is, the records of Written Documents"—as the late Duke of Argyll so well puts it in his *Primeval Man*—carries us back to the fourteenth century, a very respectable antiquity, especially when one reflects upon the vista of time that opens behind it, and for which calculation wholly fails us.

The History, therefore, of Freemasonry, apart from the attractions it will ever present to intelligent members of the Society, must always possess a high interest for all genuine votaries of archæology.

The varied types of Masonic literature, or, to be more precise, let me say the writings of the Initiated, range, however, over a very wide field, which must be briefly traversed in order that I may lay a proper foundation for the remarks which will next follow "On the Utility of the Masonic Press."

To begin with, there are "Histories of Masonry," some of which are of a general and others of a local character. Then there are the *Proceedings* of Grand Lodges and other Governing Masonic Bodies, which comprise, in many instances, "Reports on Correspondence"—being the criticism in each case, of some duly appointed member of a particular jurisdiction—almost invariably a very able man—on the procedure and legisla-

tion of the other cognate jurisdictions. Lastly, to pass over Calendars, Disquisitions, Monographs on particular subjects, and other miscellaneous items of a well-assorted *bibliotheca* of the Craft—there are the Masonic Journals and Magazines.

These I cannot deal with in the present article, either quite in the order shown above, or at the length I could desire, but it will afford me pleasure to return to them in future ones, provided, indeed, that the remarks with which I am now proceeding are deemed of sufficient interest by the Fraternity at large to justify a fuller and more critical examination of the subjects to which they relate.

Before, however, going any further, and as a prelude to the observations which will next follow, let me introduce a passage which occurs in a letter written by Horace Walpole to Lady Ossory, August 31st, 1782—"I have just been reading a most entertaining book, part was published some time ago in the *Archæologia*, and is almost the only paper in that mass of rubbish that has a grain of common sense, it is Mr. E. King on Ancient Castles." The *Archæologia*, as most readers are aware, is the title by which the "Transactions" of the Society of Antiquaries are described, and the extremely unflattering manner in which the work performed by an association claiming the whole realm of antiquity as its domain, is summed up by one of the greatest men of letters of his age, ought not to be without a soothing influence, when, in their smaller orbit, labours equally misdirected and resulting in a vast heap of enthusiastic rubbish, are surveyed with very melancholy feelings by and afford a sorrowful retrospective view to the Freemasons.

The Craftsmen to-day have a goodly heritage, and behind the boundaries of ascertained facts they have a far-stretching unknown history which may some day be made clearer to us. The times, indeed, have changed since Hallam wrote: "The curious subject of Freemasonry has, unfortunately, been treated only by panegyrists and calumniators, both equally mendacious." But the misfortune is that no Masonic book ever grows out of date. The newer and more critical methods adopted by writers of the Craft during the present era, have by no means "stamped out" the effect of the pernicious nonsense which was accepted as "history" down to a period coinciding with that of the generation which has just passed away. The old fables of the Craft, therefore, while still continuing to excite the gaping wonder of the ignorant, on the other hand only tend to provoke the contempt of scholars and men of intelligence—a contempt which is at once too intense and too disdainful to condescend to even examine the rational grounds for pride which every Freemason may justly claim. To any reader who is incredulous on this point, I recommend a glance at any one of our British Encyclopædias, where, if he meets with the slightest approach to accuracy in the definition of "Freemasonry," he will succeed in finding what I have never been able to discover for myself. Also, if he is desirous of ascertaining the most fanciful and delusive of all the attempts which have hitherto been made to explain the derivation of the word "Freemason," let him look for it in the pages of the "New English Dictionary." The conclusion is obvious, or, at least, it seems so to myself. When the "general" (or as it would be styled on the Continent the "profane," *i.e.*, the non-Masonic) Encyclopædias and Dictionaries lend themselves to the perpetuation of Masonic error, the remedy should be sought in the action of the Masonic Press. This topic, however, I must forsake, at least for the present, for though I have only touched the fringe of a vast subject, there are others which demand a share of our consideration in the space that has been placed at my disposal.

The *Proceedings* of the American Grand Lodges and other governing Masonic Bodies I must pass over, for the moment, with the remark that public opinion, so far as it may be said to exist among the Freemasons of the United States, is chiefly moulded by the able writings of the Reporters on Correspondence for the various jurisdictions.

I now turn to the magazines and Journals of the Fraternity, or, in other words, to the Periodicals, properly so-called, as distinguished from the "Proceedings" and "Official Bulletins" of the various Governing Bodies of the Society, but as illustrative of the altered conditions under which men now write, as compared with those that existed about the time when Masonry first put on its modern attire (1717-1738), an anecdote occurs to my mind, which may possibly prove interesting to the reader:—

It is related by Nicéron in one of the sixty-nine volumes of his *Mémoires des Hommes illustres dans la République des Lettres*, that one Catherinot, a most prolific writer, could never get a printer, and was rather compelled to study economy in his two hundred quartos of four or eight pages. His paper was of inferior quality, and when he could not get his dissertations into his prescribed number of pages, he used to promise the end at another time, which did not always happen. But his greatest anxiety was to publish and spread

his works. In despair, he adopted an odd expedient. Whenever Monsieur Catherinot came to Paris he used to haunt the *quais* where books are sold, and while he appeared to be looking over them he adroitly slid one of his own dissertations among the old books. He began this mode of publication early, and continued it to his last days. He died with a perfect conviction that he had secured his immortality, and in this manner had disposed of more than one edition of his unsaleable works. Nicéron has given the titles of 118 of his pieces which he had looked over.

Almost within living memory the literary class was much derided by men of action as a collection of useless idlers, and the feeling was much more natural one hundred and fifty or more years ago. Times have greatly changed, however, and to any writer who sets no value on his wares beyond the satisfaction afforded by their appearance in print, a ready market is now always available in the columns of some one or other of the periodicals of the Fraternity. These are of two kinds—Journals or Newspapers, and Magazines or Reviews. It is with the former class that I shall first deal, and at this point it may be convenient if I remind the reader of two incidents, one of which has recently engaged, and the other shortly will engage, the attention of the Parliament of the English Craft. The events to which I refer are the suspension of a well-known and much respected brother in the summer of last year, and the issue of a circular (in the nature of a *referendum*) on the subject of the election of the Grand Treasurer by the Board of General Purposes to the Lodges.

The echoes of the earlier controversy are gradually subsiding, but they have not quite faded away, and before they do so, and the din of the later one has fairly begun, perhaps the desultory observations which are here strung together—from the point of view of a very old journalist of the Craft—on the manifest utility of a free Masonic press, may be considered as finding their most natural outlet in the columns of the *Freemason*.

In continuing my remarks, I shall begin by asking whether it is desirable that Freemasonry should be preserved as nearly as possible in its original purity? and while the question, if treated academically, will receive, in most instances, an affirmative reply, the result will be quite different if the actions of the most influential section of the Masonic body are to be taken as rightly interpreting the actual sentiments of the persons of whom it is composed. In all countries where the Craft flourishes there is a craving for what are called "Higher Degrees," and, consciously or unconsciously, the Ancient Landmarks of Masonry are steadily being pushed forward by the votaries of these novelties.

The topics, however, to which I have last referred, namely, the "Ancient Landmarks," and the "Higher Degrees," except so far as they may be either directly or indirectly connected with other matters which are now being discussed, lie outside the scope of my present purpose.

I shall next ask the patient reader who has followed me thus far, to suppose that a cosmopolitan meeting of experts in Masonry is taking place. Let us imagine that British, Irish, American, and German representatives are present, and while not venturing to emulate the fame of the late Walter Savage Landor by constructing the series of "Imaginary Conversations" that might be expected to occur at such a gathering, I shall, nevertheless—culling from various sources—record some of the observations which have been made by careful writers of particular nationalities, with regard to the work and procedure of the brethren in other jurisdictions. Between the English Masonic usages and those existing in the United States, there are some remarkable divergencies. These—according to writers of the latter country—arise from the fact that Masonry was planted in America nearly two centuries ago, and has never been altered by *law* since, while Masonry in England *has*. True, they say, Thomas Smith Webb reshaped it slightly, and Jeremy L. Cross still more, while later lecturers have done what they could to make their marks upon it, but no Grand Lodge has attempted an innovation of any sort, and the Constitutions of the United States to-day contain the features, with but few original ones, of the Ancient Charges and "Anderson's Constitutions," so-called, of 1723. Widely divergent, they argue, has been the practice of English Masons. Within fifteen years of the time of publishing their first "Constitutions"—the basis of all the American Grand Lodge Constitutions—they had authorised a second edition, more adverse to the first than any one Grand Lodge Constitution in the United States differs from another. And so they went on, each edition at variance with the last, until the year 1813. Then the two opposing Grand Lodges that had warred for about sixty years, united under a new Constitution, more diverse, more anomalous more filled with innovations than all that had preceded it. Without considering at any length the wording of this formidable indictment, it will be sufficient to say that while

there came into use in the English Lodges a *single* authorised system of working, *after* the union of 1813—*before* that memorable event there were *two*; and also prior to 1813 the Scottish, Irish, German, and American Lodges had methods of working peculiarly their own, which they claim to have continued without intermission (or admixture from any other fount of knowledge) down to the present day. To use a form of words with which those who are acquainted with the writings of the late Bro. James Stevens will be familiar,—“Which is correct?” I shall next quote from the wisdom of Lord Bacon, in *The Advancement of Learning*,—“Another error is the conceit that of former opinions . . . after variety and examination, the best hath still prevailed, and suppressed the rest”—a delusion, indeed, restricted to no age or country, and the extirpation of which—in the case immediately before us—can only be effected by the untiring efforts of the Masonic Press.

I shall now borrow an amusing passage from *The Life and Exploits of Don Quixote De La Mancha*. That famous hero of romance, together with his trusty squire, was being entertained by a certain Duke and Duchess, and then they sat down to table, “the Duke offered Don Quixote the upper end, and though he would have declined it, the importunities of the Duke prevailed upon him to accept it. Sancho was surprised and astonished to see the honour these princes did his master, and, perceiving the many entreaties and ceremonies which passed between the Duke and Don Quixote to make him sit down at the head of the table, he said, if your honours will give me leave, I will tell you a story. . . . A certain gentleman of our town, very rich and of a good family, . . . invited a farmer, who was poor, but honest, to dinner. . . . They were both standing, and just ready to sit down, the farmer disputed obstinately with the gentleman to take the upper end of the table, and the gentleman, with as much positiveness, pressed the farmer to take it, saying he ought to command in his own house. But the countryman, piquing himself upon his civility and good breeding, would by no means sit down, till the gentleman, in a fret, laying both his hands upon the farmer’s shoulders, made him sit down by main force, saying: *Sit thee down, chaff-thrashing churl; for, let me sit where I will, that is the upper end to thee.*”

The position that would naturally be assumed by, and universally accorded to, the governing body of English Freemasonry, at a meeting of the Family of Grand Lodges is not ill defined in the passage which I have just given from the immortal work of Cervantes. The manner in which the other parties to the conference took their places at the board would be wholly immaterial—wherever the seat of the Grand Lodge of England happened to be (either by accident or design) would become, *ipso facto*, the head of the table.

It might be well, however, to steadfastly bear in mind the old maxim, which is none the less worthy of recollection because it has come down from times very remote to our own—“*Noblesse oblige*”—or, to vary the expression:

“O, it is excellent
To have a giant’s strength; but it is tyrannous
To use it like a giant.”

The Grand Lodge of England has always pursued the even tenour of its way without looking either to the right hand or the left, and with a lofty disregard of the code of international Masonic law which has been evolved by the united labours of the multitude of Grand Lodges in North America. The doctrines of Physical Perfection, Exclusive and Perpetual Jurisdiction, together with many others that might be named, have happily, (as it seems to myself) never been adopted in English Masonry. There is also, moreover, another American custom—I had nearly written “absurdity”—the consideration of which will take me back to the subject of the “Masonic Press,” and afford an opportunity of pointing out that in “using its strength like a giant,” though at a period now somewhat remote from our own, the Grand Lodge of England sowed the seed of what has proved to be a disastrous harvest in the New, and may possibly be attended by a like result in the Old World.

“To follow foolish precedents, and wink
With both our eyes, is easier than to think.”

This brings me to the “War of the Rites,” or as it is, perhaps, more commonly styled, the “Massachusetts New Departure,” of 1882, in which year the Grand Lodge of that State, by resolution affirmed that certain associations including Grand Chapters, Grand Councils and Commanderies, together with the Supreme Councils 33°, Northern and Southern Jurisdictions *were* Masonic bodies, and impliedly, that certain other associations, meaning the Supreme Councils 33°, working in rivalry with those of the Northern and Southern Jurisdictions, (U.S.A.) and popularly known as “Cerneautes,” *were not*. Other American

Grand Lodges followed suit, and by very arbitrary and rigorous methods, "Cerneauism" was to a great extent stamped out, though it redounds to the credit of the American Craft that even when the excitement was at its height, there were a rational few by whom the power even of Grand Lodges to interfere in a struggle between the members of any Rite superadded to pure and Ancient Freemasonry, was disputed.

If, indeed, one Grand Lodge can add to the degrees of Masonry, so can another, and without arguing the case on its merits, it will be sufficient to affirm that for the action of the grand Lodge of Massachusetts in 1882, a parallel is afforded in the Articles of Union enacted by the United Grand Lodge of England in 1813.

Before, however, I forsake the topic of the "War of the Rites," let me quote from the luminous survey of current Masonic affairs by one of the most justly esteemed of the American Past Grand Masters.

CLANDESTINE LODGES.

Bro. Lawrence N. Greenleaf observes: "The multiplication of clandestine lodges in this country is causing extra precautions to be taken in regard to the admission of visitors. The Masonry that one carries in his head must be supplemented by the documentary evidence he carries in his pocket. While some prefer to look with indifference upon the steady increase of the clandestine bodies, predicting their speedy exit after masquerading for a while in the guise of Masonry, we are not prepared to view the matter with complacency. From partial statistics now at hand we find there are now thirty-six such bodies in Ohio, seventeen in Pennsylvania and others being organised in Kentucky, New York, Massachusetts, and elsewhere. *The direct cause of the organisation of these clandestine bodies was the legislation against the Cerneau Rite.* In Ohio and some other Grand Jurisdictions Master Masons who persisted in their adherence to said Rite were expelled from the lodges of Ancient Craft Masonry. Those who were thus summarily disciplined have since been active in the formation of clandestine lodges. As to the wisdom of this legislation there has always been a wide diversity of opinion among the best informed Masons. Certain it is that there has followed in its wake the train of evils with which Masonry is now confronted. What the outcome is destined to be, the wisest are powerless to predict" (*Proc. G.L. Colorado 1902.*)

To properly understand the position of affairs, the reader in this country should try and suppose that in order, let me say, to cast a mantle of protection over the Supreme Council, 33°, at Golden Square, the Grand Lodge of England had laid all other manufactories of the so-called "High Degrees" working in opposition thereto under an interdict, and had followed it up by the prompt expulsions from Masonry of such members of English lodges as were disobedient to the decree.

The point indeed, that I want to press home, is whether the decision of one Grand Lodge with regard to the expulsion of a brother is to be deemed final? That is, if in the opinion of other Grand Lodges, a denial of "natural justice" has been the result? The consideration of this question would, of course, raise all manner of subsidiary issues, among which the doctrine of Exclusive Jurisdiction would occupy a foremost place. These I cannot attempt to deal with in the present article, though as the panorama I am desirous of exhibiting (at this moment) must be shown on a single canvas, it would be lacking in completeness if I passed over in utter silence perhaps the most difficult problem that occurs in current Masonic history, namely, the right of one Grand Lodge to interfere with the decisions of another—a theme, which in its varied aspects, has been handled with great dexterity by polemical writers, but can only be treated impartially in the columns of the Masonic Press.

For a similar reason—want of space—I must touch very lightly on a subject of more immediate concern to us, to wit, the extent to which our own Grand Lodge is under an obligation to the purveyors of public opinion in the Masonic Journals.

It is scarcely possible that the machinery of any human institution can work with greater smoothness and regularity than that of the Grand Lodge of England. While, on the other hand, even the most docile supporters of that august body, will hardly affirm that its absolute infallibility on all matters falling within its ken is to be positively guaranteed.

Freemasonry—to again cite the familiar axiom which I made use of so recently in the columns of this Journal—can only flourish in a free country, and a "free country" is only another way of describing a free Press. To quote the eloquent words of the present Ambassador from the United States—"With the liberty of the Press was secured the liberty

of the English race. Governments rose and fell, centuries came and went, dynasties appeared and disappeared, yet this great organ of public opinion stood for liberty and grew more powerful for good."

The occasions on which the proceedings of the "Mother of Masonic Parliaments" have been the subject of very wholesome criticism by journalists of the Craft are by no means rare, and for a late example we have not far to seek. A doubt, however, may be expressed, whether the efforts of the Masonic Press to revive an interest in the ancient learning of the Society have been conducted on proper lines, and to this point I must as nearly as possible confine my observation throughout the remainder of this article.

I had hoped, indeed, to have touched with a light hand upon some of the prevailing customs of the English Craft, and to have submitted, with deference, for the consideration of the Fraternity, whether a return to some of those usages that were formerly in vogue, might not prove of infinite benefit to the "parent stem" of our Ancient and Honourable Society.

It was a favourite remark of the late John Havers—whose intellectual eminence by the way, can only be fully realised by those still among us who have been "under the wand of the enchanter" in the Temple at Freemasons' Hall—"That Masonry was not intended to be a popular Institution," and he often expressed to me an opinion—which I fully share—that it was much better for us as English Masons, to be *as we were*, that is to say, decidedly unpopular, or at best regarded by the outside world as harmless and unaggressive monomaniacs—before the wave of popularity arose (as a corollary to the Royal patronage of 1875) which has well nigh swept us off our feet.

It certainly seems to me an unfortunate circumstance, that Masonry should have become such a fashionable Institution and hardly less so that it should apparently be deemed essential to requite those "persons of quality" who may enter its portals, by a lavish bestowal upon them of the most cherished honours of the Society. Whether, indeed, the practice of limiting the office (or rank) of Grand Warden to brethren of the highest social position is sound Masonic policy, may be well doubted, and the more so since we are told in Article IV. of the "CHARGES of a FREE-MASON" (which are prefixed to the *Book of Constitutions*)—"All preferment among masons is grounded upon real worth and personal merit only." A century ago it was a saying in the Navy, that when a distribution of prize-money took place, it was thrown on a ladder, and what passed through went to the officers, while what remained on the rounds of the ladder went to the men.

As with prize-money, so with honours (or "preferment"), in both the Land and the Sea Services, but whether a parallel to this in any way afforded by the customs of Grand Lodges I shall not pretend to determine. Certain it is, however, that singular anomalies occur under our own Grand Lodge, in the distribution of honours particularly when "past" rank is conferred; for example, the late Brother Thomas Fenn for his services at the Installation of the then Prince of Wales (of which he was the real organiser) at the Royal Albert Hall, in 1875, and our distinguished Bro. Sir Charles Warren, on his return home after commanding, as Major-General, the Bechuanaland Expedition in 1887, were rewarded with the rank of Past Grand Deacon. But in later years, the spectacle has not been an uncommon one, to witness the elevation of members of what is called the higher branch of the legal profession, over the heads of the President of the Board of General Purposes, the Grand Secretary, and the President of the Board of Benevolence, to the rank of Past Deputy Grand Registrar, the performance of the *duties* of which *office*, having been, it was generally supposed, the sole reason why an additional grade or dignity had been so recently created, for which none were presumably eligible but members of the Bar.

The office indeed, which is most in evidence at the present time of writing, is that of Grand Treasurer, and before the questions raised in the recent circular of the Board of General Purposes are finally disposed of, the air would be cleared, and the general situation better understood by the representatives of the lodges, were the subject of Grand Office as a whole, including the manner in which the present methods of election and appointment have been evolved, to become a topic for historical and critical treatment in the columns of the Masonic Press. It is probably unknown to the generality of the Craft that originally *all* the Grand Officers were elected. As matters stand at the present time, the lodges have been asked to express their opinions with regard to a solitary office in the Grand Lodge, but would it not have been far better had the reference been of a wider character? And is it too late to suggest that opinions of the lodges should be taken with regard to the general question of Office in the Grand Lodge? A subject that would naturally embrace a con-

sideration of the unlimited power of conferring past rank, a prerogative granted to the Grand Master during the administration of Lord Zetland, which was at first very sparingly exercised and only assumed formidable proportions in 1887.

A point that has greatly perplexed me in the course of my forty-seven years' service as a contributor to the ephemeral literature of the Craft will next be considered, and to do so however imperfectly, will occupy what remains of my fast dwindling space. It is whether the "Journals"—meaning the "Newspapers," or the "Magazines"—meaning the more staid "Serials" which assume rather to dispense Masonic knowledge than to chronicle current Masonic events, are to be regarded as exercising the higher beneficial influence in the education of the Craft? To the latter, in the infancy of my Masonic studies, I always accorded the first place, but with the lapse of years my opinion has veered round until at last I am of an entirely opposite way of thinking. Upon the causes which have led to this change of belief I must not linger, but a few of the conclusions that have followed in their train will be laid before the indulgent reader. To begin with, I believe in short intervals of publication, which, indeed, may be rather a matter of form than of substance, though from my own point of view it is very material to the inquiry we are now upon, since most (or all) of the Masonic "Newspapers"—properly so-called—are published weekly, while the "Magazines" (in nearly every instance) appear either monthly or quarterly, and occasionally at uncertain dates. In my own judgment, *it is essential to the success of any periodical devoted to the service of the Craft, that every facility should be afforded to its readers for a weekly interchange of Masonic thought.*

But at this stage I shall proceed with an illustration, which I trust will be in some small degree elucidatory of my further argument.

There is a very common practice which may be described as "keeping an atmosphere," and it means a rigid adherence to ancient notions, and an utter abhorrence of either new ideas or critical methods of enquiry. The common air of heaven sharpens men's judgments, but awkward questions are not put to the people who keep their own atmosphere. The critics before they can get at them have to step out of the every-day air, where only real evidence counts, into the kept atmosphere which they have no sooner breathed than they begin to see things differently. The atmosphere they may struggle against, but they cannot help breathing it.

Is it possible, indeed, that the feeling experienced by any men of intelligence (outside the pale of the Fraternity) after the accidental perusal of a Masonic *Magazine*, can be better expressed than in the following words, which I borrow from the famous "Journal" of the Brothers De Goncourt: "We end with the sensation of a closed room, of a want of ventilation; we long to open a window or two, and let in the air of the world."

To breathe this "free air" should be the immediate concern of all who are really interested in the history and antiquities of our ancient Society, and the position I have next to advance is, that to avoid a "kept atmosphere," the seeker after Masonic truth will do better to conduct his early studies under the fostering care of a leading weekly *newspaper*, than in listless dependence upon the oracular deliverances of the most fashionable of *magazines*. "The common air of Heaven sharpens men's judgments," and the "atmosphere" which is so desirable, can only be inhaled by those students of the Craft who pursue their researches in the full light of day, and in fraternal co-partnership with a really free Masonic Press.

Among the men of light and leading, as distinguished from the dreamers and enthusiasts of our Fraternity, there are a good many who subscribe to, and, happily, a fair proportion who read the *Freemason*. This, in my opinion, is of very hopeful augury, and though the rate of progress may be slow, the belief will be permissible that at some future date, however remote, we may look forward to there being an adequate as well as an intelligent appreciation of the aims and the objects of our Society.

For the general estimate, however, of Freemasonry at the present time, I turn to the pages of "*Reminiscences, chiefly of Oriol College*" (1882), by the Rev. Thomas Mozley, who, after mentioning that he had once solemnly anathematized Freemasonry as Anti-Christian, goes on to say: "Being now twice the age I was then, I feel I should be disposed to think an anathema above the occasion, and to agree with Cardinal Manning, who is said to have told Pio Nono that English Freemasonry was nothing more than a Goose Club."

The epithet is scarcely undeserved, and even if we look into the published *Transactions* of a Lodge of Freemasons, we find two papers which were read before the lodge, and they both record the Minutes of extinct lodges, ranging (unitedly) from about 1817

to 1834.* These extracts invite a comparison. Week after week, in the columns of the *Freemason*, we are interested in learning that our friends Bros. Brown, Jones, and Robinson are still alive and active in Masonry. But with the doings of their fathers or grandfathers, whom we did not know, at a period of time now remote from our own (1817-1834), and at a date when the proceedings of lodges are wholly devoid of value as historical muniments of the Craft, we are not interested at all.

There are many other matters on which I should like to dwell, as pointing in the direction of how the stigma might be removed of the Society of Freemasons being generally regarded as nothing more or less than a "Goose Club." In a lecture delivered by Dr. Emil Reich, the Hungarian professor, at Birkbeck College, 1903, "History" was described as "a system of correlation, based on psychology." "History," said the professor, "had been made by minorities, not by majorities; it had been made by intensity, not by quantity. Great Things were not made by syndicates, but by the intense cause of personality."

At this point the name of Albert Pike will rise to the lips of all those students to whom the life-work of that great Master in the Craft is familiar. But I can only allude to the "Magazine" (*Official Bulletin*) he conducted during his lifetime as being the most interesting I have ever perused, and to the periodical which has risen, Phoenix-like from its ashes—the *New Age*—a publication that is intended to commemorate at one and the same time the intellectual eminence of one of the greatest Masonic Lights of any age or country, and the abiding wish of the "Mother Supreme Council of the World" not to deviate by a hairbreadth from the path which he had marked out for it to pursue.

To lift Freemasonry to a higher level, and prove its right to the consideration and respect of men of intellect and scholarship had long seemed to Albert Pike a most worthy object to any one's ambition, and in concluding my remarks, let me venture to hope that in this sentiment many readers of the present article will be found to concur. Also, that they may regard it as indicating a legitimate field of enterprise for the exertions of the Masonic Press.

III.

THE MISSION OF THE MASONIC PRESS.

[*Freemason*, 1906.]

"Oceans of ink, and reams of paper, and disputes infinite might have been spared, if wranglers had avoided lighting the torch at the wrong end; since a tenth part of the pains expended in attempting to prove the why, the where, and the when certain events have happened, would have been more than sufficient to prove that they never happened at all."

REV. C. C. COLTON.

"Popular errors of the moment, mischievous and extensive in their effects," observes Sir Egerton Brydges, "are always in operation: truth prevails more rarely than is assumed, and false opinions, let alone, will obtain absolute dominion. The enlightened intellect which can correct them, and dissipate delusions, is a great benefactor."

Surplus copies of books, as many will be aware, are called in the trade "Remainders," and with this prelude I proceed to quote from an interview with one of the greatest dealers in those wares, of which an account was given some years ago in the newspapers. "Remainders in Law and Physic," Mr. William Glaisher, the well-known bookseller of High Holborn, is reported to have said, "would be of little use. People who want legal and medical works must have the latest editions—they must be up-to-date. I'm afraid, therefore, that surplus copies of legal and medical works become so much waste paper, and are sent back to the mills."

Let us contrast with this the fate of unsold copies of works relating to Freemasonry. Year by year, the early history of our ancient Craft is being gradually unfolded to us. *But no Masonic book ever seems to grow out of date.* The visionary writings of past times, and the more scholarly productions of our own, are perused with an equal faith. Old texts are found to yield new readings, but the old readings are not thereby displaced. Popular fallacies are exploded, *i.e.*, within a limited circle—but within a larger circle their vitality remains unimpaired.

* A.Q.C., xvii.

What, therefore, is most wanted in the true interests of Masonic study, or, perhaps, it will be better to say, in the diffusion of genuine Masonic knowledge, is a tabulation of results. The wisest man may be wiser to-day than he was yesterday, and to-morrow than he is to-day. New facts are constantly becoming known, while old facts are as rapidly disappearing, and (as it seems to myself) an efficient registration of these phenomena should be included among the duties or obligations which we naturally associate with the Mission of the Masonic Press.

It has been well said, that it is not so difficult a task to plant new truths, as to root out old errors; for there is this paradox in men, they run after that which is new, but are prejudiced in favour of that which is old.

Under the title of *A Masonic Curriculum* the late GEORGE WILLIAM SPETH wrote an interesting pamphlet, which was designed to be "A Guide to a Course of Study in Freemasonry." It was almost the last essay he lived to complete, and though a small and unpretentious contribution to the literature of the Society he served so faithfully and well, it is full of sage reflections and interesting comments on the then published works and ephemeral writings of all Masonic authors of repute, and these critical remarks will always be attractive, not only for their utility, but also for their felicities of style.

It was the object of the late Bro. Speth to point out what books and pamphlets ought to be read. A similar duty, of course, devolves on the Masonic Press, but a matter of far greater importance (as it strikes my own mind) is the urgent necessity for the literary organs of the Fraternity to speak with no uncertain sound as to the books and writings (of all classes and descriptions) which the student of Masonry will be well advised to leave severely alone.

The amount of justly merited obloquy under which the entire literature of the Craft reposes, owing to the foolish writings of so many enthusiastic but uncritical Freemasons, it would be impossible to exaggerate.

By way of illustration, let me quote some passages from a long forgotten article on "Ancient and Modern Freemasonry," by the late Dr. Armstrong, Bishop of Grahamstown, who observes: "The Livys of the Masonic Commonwealth are far from willing to let their Rome have either a mean or unknown beginning. According to Preston, 'From the commencement of the world, we may trace the foundation of Masonry'; 'But,' adds Dr. Oliver, 'ancient Masonic traditions say, and I think justly, that our science existed before the creation of this globe, and was diffused amid the numerous systems with which the grand empyreum of universal space is furnished'."

After pointing out in a strain of severe satire that the Freemasons were not in the least joking, in what many men considered as a joke, the Bishop continues: "Look, for instance, at the Rev. G. Oliver, D.D. He is quite in earnest. There is something really wonderfully refreshing in such a dry and hard-featured an age as this to find so much imagination at work. After having pored through crabbed chronicles and mouldy MSS., with malicious and perverse contractions, ragged and mildewed letters, illegible and faded diaries, &c. *it is quite refreshing to drive along the smooth and glassy road of imaginative history.* Of course, where there is any dealing with the more hackneyed facts of history, we must expect a little eccentricity and some looseness of statement—we cannot travel quickly and cautiously, too. Thus the Doctor of Divinity before mentioned somewhat startles us by an assertion respecting the destruction of Solomon's Temple: 'Its destruction by the Romans, as predicted, was fulfilled in the most minute particulars; and on the same authority we are quite certain it will never be rebuilt.' *He is simply mistaking the second Temple for the first.*"

The Bishop further observes:—"There are minds which seem to rejoice in the misty regions of doubt, which see best in the dark, which have a sensation of being handcuffed when they are tied to proofs and documents; they despise those stubborn facts, the mules of history, on which safe historians are content to ride down the crags and precipices of olden times, '*Inveniam viam aut faciam*'; I will find my facts or make them; so say the Masonic writers. They have the same contempt for plain plodding historians which we can conceive a stoker of the Great Western dashing out of Paddington would feel for an ancient couple, could such be seen jogging leisurely out of town in pillion-fashion on their old sober mare, with the prospect of a week's journey to Bath. They drive the 'express trains' of history. While we are groping and floundering amid the fens and bogs of the seventh, eighth and ninth centuries, they look upon such times as the mere suburbs of the present age—'the easy distance from town.' They dash past centuries, as railroad trains whisk past milestones. For ourselves we see nothing of Freemasons before the seventh century; we cannot even scent the breath of a reasonable rumour. But if we put

ourselves under the charge of the most sober and matter-of-fact Masonic historians, away we are scurried from the seventh to the sixth, from the sixth to the fifth, from the fifth to the fourth, to the third, to the second, till, with dizzy heads, and our breath gone, we find ourselves put down by the Temple of Solomon."

Dr. Oliver, of course, was not the only, but he may justly be styled the worst offender in matters of the kind, as of all the vast array of authors who have written on the subject of Freemasonry, he was the most prolific, and in the quantity of the publications that issued from his pen, there has been no one to compete with him either in the Old World or the New.

All the works of Dr. Oliver would be put into an *Index Purgatorius*, that is to say, if the scholars of Masonry were empowered to draw up "A Catalogue of Books prohibited to be read." The book of his, however, that has probably done the most harm is *The Revelations of a Square*, a sort of Masonic Romance, professing to detail, though in a fictitious form, many of the usages of the last centuries, with anecdotes of the leading Masons of that period. Most of the articles on the English Ritual of the eighteenth century, written since the publication of this work, have been based on the illusory "Revelations" of Dr. Oliver's imaginary "Square."

In the remarks, however, with which I am now proceeding, space would fail me were I to attempt to enumerate the books and pamphlets which should be carefully avoided and left unread by all serious students of Freemasonry. The utmost I can do is to present in a small compass a body of specious but radically unsound doctrine, which, if resolutely stamped out by the combined action of the Masonic Press, would result in a purification of our sources of knowledge, and tend to remove the popular impression that Freemasonry is wholly unworthy of the attention either of scholars or men of intelligence.

Historical fictions have been common in all ages, and the particular branch of "history" in which Masonry is contained, has its full share of them.

There is nothing from which we have reason to infer, that the cathedral (or church) builders were a separate class from the Masons of the City Guilds or companies; that the Manuscript Constitutions belonged to the Church-building Masons; or that the Church builders were a single fraternity, travelling from place to place as their services were required and making themselves known by means of secret grips, words, and signs.

Papal Bulls were not given to the Freemasons, nor had they an annual Parliament of their own. The first Grand Lodge was formed, and the first Grand Master elected in 1717. Sir Christopher Wren was not a Grand Master, nor is there any proof that he was a Freemason at all. The Grand Lodge of England (1717) was not founded by Payne, Anderson, and Desaguliers, or any one of them. Two Degrees and not three were recognised by the Grand Lodge of England in 1723. Neither Martin Clare nor Thomas Manningham revised the Ritual, and the labours of Thomas Dunkerley in the same direction are equally imaginary. Andrew Michael Ramsay did not invent a single one of the numerous Rites that have been fathered on him. The young Pretender—Charles Edward—was not a Freemason. There has never been—except in the imagination of American writers—a York Rite; nor are there any Prerogatives, which are inherent to the office of a Grand Master. The dogmas of Perpetual Jurisdiction, Physical Perfection, and Exclusive (or Territorial) Jurisdiction, have been evolved since the introduction of Masonry into what has become the "United States," from England, during the first or second quarters of the eighteenth century. No alterations were made by the Original Grand Lodge of England in the "established forms." The story of Mrs. Aldworth, the alleged "Lady Freemason," is of no historical value whatever, and to bring my list of delusions to a close (though the examples could be greatly multiplied) the now familiar *met du quel*, "the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man," would have been both unmeaning and unintelligible to the Masons living in the era that preceded that of Grand Lodges, as their conception of a creed would have been a strict belief in the Trinity; and probably nothing would have more surprised our ancient brethren than to hear it mooted that persons of other than Anglo-Saxon parentage were qualified for admission into the Society.

It will scarcely be denied by anyone, that owing to the loose and inaccurate—not to say extremely foolish—manner in which Masonic history has been written, there is much that the present, and possibly a later generation will have to live down. That the efforts of the true lovers of Freemasonry in this direction will be ultimately successful I have myself no doubt whatever, but the period of time that may be expected to lapse before this aspiration is fulfilled must necessarily vary in extent, accordingly as enlightened assistance is rendered, or not rendered, by the concerted action of the Masonic Press.

The task immediately before us is to show, that with the disappearance of its fabulous history, there emerges a real history, of which every intelligent Freemason may feel justly proud.

There is an anecdote of Lord Chesterfield, so much to my present purpose, that I cannot refrain from relating it, as I conceive that it will be deemed in point by most readers, and to some may possibly be new. We are told by Horace Walpole, in one of his Letters, that on a certain occasion Lord Chesterfield exclaimed to John Anstis, Garter King of Arms, "You foolish man, you do not understand your own very foolish business." Without doubt, there are points of resemblance—suggestive of a family likeness—between the Herald and the Freemason, when each of them is clad in the full panoply of his regalia, which strikes the eye of the ignorant (or untutored) observer; and while I do not for an instant wish it to be supposed that I consider the "business" of a Freemason to be a "foolish" one (which, indeed, would be in direct opposition to the view I am seeking to establish), nevertheless, I shall venture to affirm that the profound ignorance of the generality of the Craft with regard to the history and antiquities of our venerable Society, might well extenuate, if it did not entirely excuse, the words of Lord Chesterfield, if peradventure, instead of being addressed to the Garter King of Arms, they had been used with respect to the "business," *as commonly understood*, of a Freemason.

"The boys that grind my colours," said Apelles to one of the priests of Diana, "look upon you with respect, while you are silent, because of the gold and purple of your garments; but when you speak of what you do not understand, they laugh at you."

"Why do men study ancient history, acquire a knowledge of dead languages, and decipher illegible inscriptions? What gives life to the study of antiquity? What compels men, in the midst of these busy times, to sacrifice their leisure to studies apparently so unattractive and useless, if not the conviction, that in order to obey the Delphic commandment—in order to know what Man is, we ought to know what Man has been?"

The foregoing are the words of the late Professor Max Muller, and they are as applicable to the study of Masonry, as to the investigation of any other branch of historical research. The authentic history of our ancient Craft can be traced, by the evidence of existing documents, to the fourteenth century, and without the shadow of a doubt it had then attained a hale and vigorous old age.

The recent labours of many learned men have brought to actual demonstration, what was previously only matter of strong probability, that a state of society highly cultivated and refined, existed in various parts of the globe, prior to any written or authentic documents transmitted to us. Are we justified in supposing that the traditions which connect Masonry with those ancient peoples, among whom that advanced condition of civilisation is found to have prevailed, are entitled to any real weight?

Of traditionary evidence, indeed, it has been said by an old writer whose name I forget, "that a great cloud of smoke argues at least a little fire."

But the observation is a shrewd one, and I have reminded the reader of it, as the Traditions—Written or Unwritten—of Freemasonry are its chief glory, and in these consists its superiority over all other Associations.

"Say what you will against *Tradition*," wrote the learned Selden; "we know the Signification of Words by nothing but Tradition. You will say the Scripture was written by the Holy Spirit; but do you understand the Language 'twas writ in? No. Then, for example, take these words, *In principio erat verbum*. How do you know these words signify, *In the beginning was the word*, but by Tradition, because some Body has told you so."

But long before the discoveries of recent times, there were monuments in many countries which fairly justified the *belief* that has now ripened into actual knowledge. The magnificent ruins of ancient cities, of which no record remained, the Pyramids, concerning which the remotest antiquity had nothing to depose, the advanced state of the sciences of Geometry and Astronomy amongst the Egyptians and the Babylonians, amply warranted the *presumption* that a high state of cultivation and knowledge did exist anterior to any written documents or historical records.

To the *literati* of our Craft it will be unnecessary to explain either that the characteristic signs now called Masons' Marks, were originally developed at a very early period in the East, and have been since used as distinguishing emblems of some kind throughout the Middle Ages, in Persia, Syria, Egypt and elsewhere; or, that the Science of Geometry as taught by Euclid to the Egyptians, was the *fons et origo* of the Craft of Masonry, that is, if we may repose any confidence in what is distinctly affirmed by the most ancient Manuscripts of our Society.

There are many further points on each of which I should like to say a few words, but as this cannot be done, I shall make the best selection I can for treatment in the present article. To begin with, there is a certain amount of drudgery associated with the acquisition of the rudiments of Masonic knowledge, which may explain, perhaps, why it is that no one who enters upon the study of Masonry late in life ever pursues it to an entirely satisfactory conclusion. "More, therefore (to slightly paraphrase the words of Dr. Johnson, when speaking of the natives of Scotland), may be expected from a Mason, who has been caught young." Lengthy works, however, are not generally esteemed by any Masonic readers, who, in this particular, remind one of the Italian convict—the story is told by Macaulay. He was given the choice of the galleys or reading through Guicciardini; he chose Guicciardini but stuck fast in the wars of Pisa, thought better of it, and took to the oar.

The famous author of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, has spoken of "the vast space which every ray of light has to traverse before it reaches the eye of the common understanding." But since the days of Edward Gibbon, many things have happened, and at the present day intelligibility is not considered by learned men as a sort of reflection on their intellectual status. It is no longer a reproach to be "popular." On the contrary, it is generally understood that the *savant* who is unable to make the abstruse moderately simple is not gifted with a very clear intellect, or is deficient in that literary ability which is so marked a characteristic of the leading latter-day writers on subjects of scientific, artistic, or of any other special character.

The extent to which the history of our own Craft has been critically and intelligibly dealt with by writers of the present generation, is a question on which, for obvious reasons, I should hesitate to pronounce any judgment at all. But wherever they have failed to bring down to the level of the ordinary mind the bearings of the latest discoveries, let us hope that what Proctor did for Astronomy, what Huxley and Wallace achieved for Natural History, what Tyndall accomplished for Physics in this country, and Helmholtz in Germany, may be done for Masonry by the organised labours of the Masonic Press.

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